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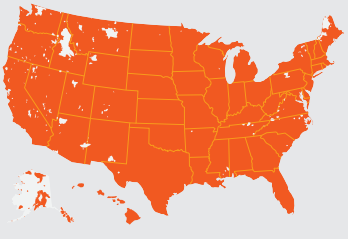

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View videos, read more stories and find resources at **legion.org**.

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 1.6 million members. These wartime veterans, working through more than 12,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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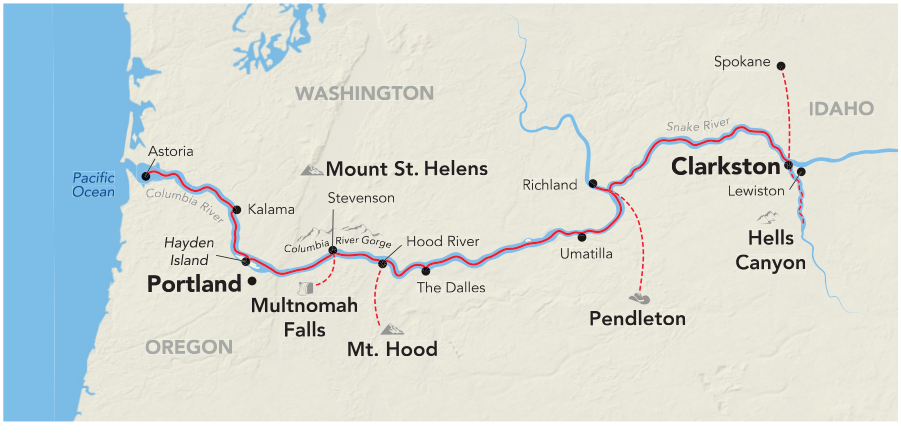

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Photo courtesy Tim Decker

Silent Warriors

I enjoyed Ken Olsen's very informative article (August). These relatively unknown people were obviously a skilled group and saved countless lives. Such is the same today, as the EC-130s have done duty in Iraq, Afghanistan and other places. Our son-in-law was a pilot, and our daughter is an intelligence officer. Of course, the silence about their missions continues.

Bill McDowell, Shippensburg, Pa.

I served in the Air Force Security Service from 1964 to 1968. From my first overseas assignment to San Vito dei Normanni Air Station in Italy, I was one of 12 men who volunteered to go to Vietnam in 1966. Unfortunately, we suffered the first loss of an EC-47, "Tide 86," in 1967. Along with the aircrew, we lost three Silent Warriors of the 6994th Security Squadron. Friends to each of us, we mourned their loss but remained dedicated to the task we were chosen to do. I was and still am so proud to be a Silent Warrior. Hopefully, history will acknowledge the real contributions made by these men.

Charles Phippin, Salisbury, Md.

I encountered these guys at Shaw, Wiesbaden, Hof and Brindisi, but never heard a peep about what they did. Others talked, but not them. AP escorts and briefcases chained to their wrists. You were not catching a ride with them, except for the four T-29 Courier planes with the steward who operated the camera behind the rear bulkhead and continued on to Berlin. I did volunteer work with a major who was a navigator on one of the C-97s. They didn't advertise that they were ECs or RCs and had sliding panels and sneaky antennas. When they went out, not even their wives knew where they had been. Look up the "Berlin for Lunch Bunch."

David Ingram, Centerville, Ohio

THE AMERICAN Legion MAGAZINE

Veterans Strengthening America

NATIONAL COMMANDER Daniel J. Seehafer
PUBLISHER The American Legion
DIRECTOR OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS Jeff Stoffer
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS Henry Howard
MANAGING EDITOR Matt Grills
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Laura Edwards
ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR Katherine Chrisman
VISUAL TEAM MANAGER Holly K. Soria
GRAPHIC DESIGN SPECIALIST Celesta Török-Lee
MULTIMEDIA CONTENT PRODUCER Hilary Ott
MULTIMEDIA CONTENT PRODUCER Jennifer Blohm
PRODUCTION MANAGER Tony Heath
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR Alan W. Dowd

ADVERTISING
ADVERTISING MANAGER Diane Andretti
ASSISTANT ADVERTISING MANAGER Chris Elliot

HOW TO CONTACT US
AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206
EMAIL: magazine@legion.org
TELEPHONE: (317) 630-1272
WEBSITE: legion.org

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Road Map to Post-Service Prosperity

I read the article by Laura Edwards (August), and would like to add some valuable information. I am a public affairs officer with the Naval Facilities Engineering and Expeditionary Warfare Center. In addition to the opportunities mentioned, government agencies and military commands such as mine have a desperate need for drivers and mechanics. Taking a position as a civilian federal employee allows veterans to continue to serve while providing many of the same benefits they enjoyed in the military, such as job security, health benefits, time off, pensions and retirement investment accounts.

While veterans can benefit from hiring preferences for federal employment, veteran truck drivers and mechanics have another advantage over civilian truckers applying for the same positions: veterans are familiar with the exact vehicles and equipment used by military commands. It could take months or years to train civilians to work with them.

Many commands post jobs on popular social media sites, but for full details about a position, **usajobs.gov** is still the place to go.

James P. Stossel, Port Hueneme, Calif.

'Our Gift to Ourselves'

As a Coast Guard veteran, I am sure most of my shipmates could relate to National Park Service Director Chuck Sams III when he says his staff has "the discipline of being able to do a lot with very little at times" (July). It still goes on today: small budgets and fewer Coasties to stay "Semper Paratus" while conducting multiple worldwide missions. The NPS and the Coast Guard are both in the business of protecting our nation's rich heritage. The two agencies could learn a lot from each other. I think the NPS is in good hands with Sams at the helm.

Jeffrey Webster, Green Valley, Ariz.

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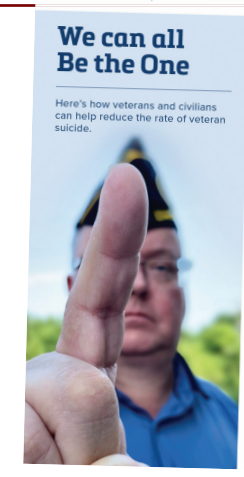
AMERICAN LEGION | BE THE ONE

Tools for your Be the One event



American Legion posts have an opportunity each month to promote the Be the One initiative, which aims to reduce the number of veteran suicides. Resolution 13, approved by the National Executive Committee in May, establishes Be the One Days on the first of every month.

Whether your post is planning an event in conjunction with a Be the One Day, Veterans Day or another occasion, National Headquarters offers free resources to help, including:

- **Brochures** One trifold is a PDF that can be used to educate agencies, community partners, local government leaders and others about Be the One. The other is a Word document that can be downloaded and customized for posts to use at suicide-awareness events. The entire back page of this trifold is blank, allowing posts to fill that space with a list of local resources.
- **Physical displays** Need a Be the One banner stand or flag for your event? Print-ready files are available for a 3x5 Be the One flag and 2x6 banner stand, and can be sent to a local or online vendor for printing.
- **Sample press release** Download and customize this resource to inform your local media about your event.
- **Videos** A Vimeo playlist includes videos that can be downloaded and played while offline. They can be shared on social media, posted to the web and played at post events. There is also a link to a YouTube video playlist featuring content related to Be the One.
- **Wallet cards** There are several options for Be the One-themed business cards that include QR codes. They can be used as single-sided cards, combined for double-sided cards, or added to the back of a personal business card.

Visit **betheone.org** for these resources and more.

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150 years of beans

Storms tried their best to stir the pot at the American Legion Post 102-coordinated Old Soldiers and Sailors Reunion bean feed in Erie, Kan., on July 14. But they only produced a pause in community members lining up to fill coolers, kettles and tubs with free beans.

"This is the 150th year of doing this," said Dale Jeffrey, a Vietnam War Navy veteran and Post 102's commander. "We've kept it going. It didn't matter if we had rain, storms, pandemics, whatever it is. We would not let it die." The post has been running the bean feed and much of the reunion week's events for more than 50 years.

A 1973 history explains that the tradition began when "many Northern veterans settled in the country around Erie as the government gave them a bonus of land for their service in the war.

"As salt pork and navy beans were a staple food of the soldiers in the Civil War, it was natural for the boys to cook up several kettles of beans, sit around the fire and tell stories and listen to speeches," the 1973 history continues. "The public also gathered to listen to the stories and speeches and joined in the reunion. But only the veterans and their families ate the beans."

"Kansas was a half and half state – and so after it was over, families said, 'We need to get together and talk again,'" Department of Kansas Commander Randy Frank said.

That spirit is alive and well today. The entire community celebrated the week of July 10-15 with several events, including a parade themed

Photo by Jeff Stoffer

"Honoring Veterans Past and Present" and the reading of names at the Veterans Memorial Wall on the courthouse lawn. Near the memorial is a 75-gallon iron kettle under a gazebo, in recognition of the long community tradition.

The majority of funding for the bean feed comes from Post 102's memorial fund, built on contributions from the families of Legion members who have passed away. That turns the event into a veteran memorial observance as well. The post has about 125 members, and Jeffrey said it's important that those who put on the bean feed and reunion guide a new generation to keep the tradition alive. "We need to be mentoring people every year to take over the jobs we have been doing."

– Jeff Stoffer

Read more, and see photos, about the 150th anniversary and Post 102's involvement: ***legion.org/membership***

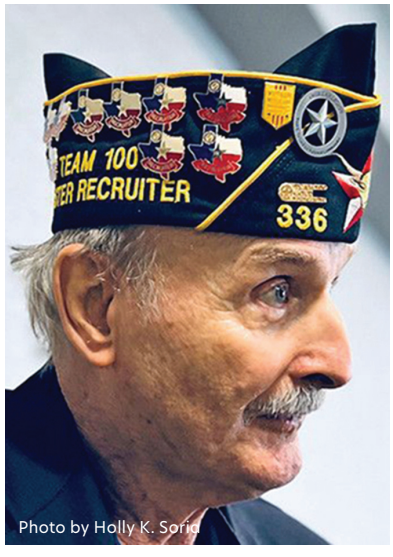

Photo by Holly K. Sorid

"The most I ever signed up in one day was 17, which was a good day .... It's very easy to sign up people if you're positive."

Texas American Legion "Master Recruiter" Walter Geraghty Jr., a member of **Audie L. Murphy Post 336** in San Antonio, and a perennial Gold Brigade Award (50 or more new members in a membership year) winner who estimates he has signed up nearly 5,000 Legionnaires single-handedly over the years. One post the Vietnam War Air Force veteran revitalized went from 12 members to 1,006 in fewer than 10 years. His recruiting efforts didn't even stop during a serious cardiac episode in 2021: after being unconscious for 52 continuous hours, he signed up three new members – including one of his nurses – before he was discharged. Geraghty serves on the national Membership & Post Activities Committee.

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The Home Loan Guaranty Program plummeted from 1.44 million loans guaranteed in (fiscal) 2021 to 746,091 in (fiscal) 2022 ...

The dependent or surviving spouse and children of a veteran may not use this program their family member earned ...

Be it resolved ...

The American Legion urges VA to amend the Home Loan Guaranty Program to include eligibility of the veteran's dependent or surviving spouse and children.

Passed, American Legion National Executive Committee Spring Meeting, May 10-11, 2023

THE PLAYLIST

American Legion videos you don't want to miss.

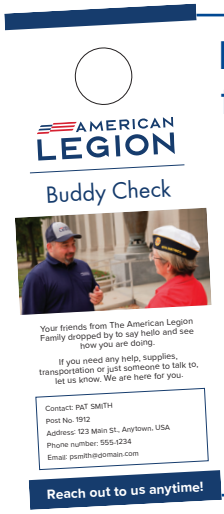
Photo by Chet Strange

Jump with the Golden Knights
The U.S. Army Golden Knights parachute into Shelby, N.C., for the American Legion Baseball World Series and describe what it means to them.

Guardsman talks transition to trucking
Mechanic says skills-test waiver and Task Force Movement helped move his civilian career along.

Everesting Challenge accepted
Air Force veteran, Iowa Legionnaire explains why Be the One matters to him in his quest to hike 29,029 feet uphill.

Visit **legion.org/legiontv** or subscribe to The American Legion's YouTube channel to see, show and share other American Legion videos.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Resource materials available for first National Buddy Check Week

The Department of Veterans Affairs has set Oct. 16-20 for its first National Buddy Check Week. The outreach effort is modeled after The American Legion's successful Buddy Check program that began in March 2019. Nearly 4,000 American Legion posts a year have since conducted Buddy Checks to provide firsthand assistance and friendship to veterans and their families. Tools and resources for Legionnaires to use, including new door hangers to leave at homes, are available at **legion.org/buddycheck**.

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Amount in American Legion Operation Comfort Warriors grants disbursed in July, purchasing for recovering military personnel and qualified veterans home exercise equipment, a mattress, a desk chair and a stand-up desk

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- J. Fitzgerald, VA

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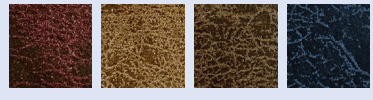

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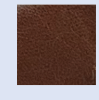

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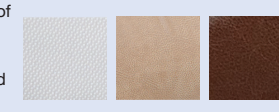

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Don't miss these Tango Alpha Lima episodes

The American Legion Tango Alpha Lima podcast, with more than 200,000 downloads since its launch in April 2020, captures the compelling stories of veterans, servicemembers and their families. Among the most popular episodes released over the summer:

"It was challenging in ways that I cannot even explain, because there was so much going on with my husband being deployed out of the country and I was left alone."

Lydiah Owiti, a military spouse born in Kenya, who shares how she reinvented herself after coming to the United States. Now she helps other military spouses in her role at Hiring Our Heroes.

"The trauma – the things we go through in life – doesn't have to break you."

Marine Corps Lt. Col. Chris Reardon, executive director of Freedom Fitness America, who appears with advisory board member Patty Klop, a retired Marine Corps colonel. They address PTSD, veteran suicide and more.

"As Jimmy Buffett said, 'Some of it is magic, and some of it is tragic.' And that is just the truth. The story is timeless and represents every veteran who served."

Retired Marine Corps Col. Eric "Ferris" Buer, who describes his experiences flying attack helicopters during Iraqi Freedom in his book "Ghosts of Baghdad"

A new Tango Alpha Lima podcast is published Tuesday mornings. Visit **legion.org/tangoalphalima** for past episodes in audio and video formats. Subscribe at Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts and other major podcast-hosting sites.

Indiana post invests in gaming program

When Frank Huntzinger American Legion Post 45 in Noblesville, Ind., moved into its new home this summer, a room was designated as a computer lab. And now four gaming PCs have been installed, thanks to the combined efforts of the post, REGIMENT Gaming and Paradox Customs, which custom-builds gaming systems.

Post Commander John Morris says the decision to purchase the PCs is part of a bigger strategy to bring in younger members. "I knew we needed to start addressing something with the younger vets," he explains. "My son and my son-in-law game. My daughter (post adjutant Taylor Munoz) is a Navy vet; she doesn't game as much as he does, but she still games. And I knew I wanted to put a computer lab in because once I'm not commander and have some free time, I want to start opening it up to computer classes, skills development and stuff."

On July 1, it was announced that The American Legion has become the official veteran service organization of REGIMENT Gaming, the nation's largest veteran gaming community.

Read more about how that relationship is benefiting Post 45 at **legion.org/membership.**

808

Informal hearing presentations prepared in July by American Legion national claims specialists, free of charge, on behalf of veterans appealing their VA benefits decisions

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- Risk of developing wet AMD. You should be monitored for signs of wet AMD and you should report any symptoms (eg, visual distortion, deterioration in vision, black spots, loss of central vision) to your healthcare provider
- Episodes of eye inflammation. You should report any symptoms (eg, pain or discomfort, redness, swelling, or sensitivity to light, small specks floating in your vision, changes in vision) to your healthcare provider

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION (CONT'D)

SYFOVRE can cause serious side effects (cont'd):

- Increase in eye pressure within minutes of the injection. Your healthcare provider will monitor this after each injection

Before receiving SYFOVRE:

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  - If you have high pressure in the eye or if you have glaucoma
- **Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions,** including
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What should I avoid while receiving SYFOVRE?

- After an injection or an eye exam, your eyesight may temporarily be impaired. Do not drive or use machinery until your vision recovers

What are the most common side effects of SYFOVRE?

- Eye discomfort
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- Small specks floating in vision
- Blood in the white of the eye

These are not all the possible side effects of SYFOVRE. Tell your healthcare provider about any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at **1-800-FDA-1088** or **www.fda.gov/medwatch.**

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This summary contains risk and safety information for patients about SYFOVRE. It does not include all the information about SYFOVRE and does not take the place of talking to your eye doctor about your medical condition or treatment.

What is SYFOVRE?
SYFOVRE is a prescription eye injection, used to treat geographic atrophy (GA), the dry advanced form of age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

How is SYFOVRE given?
SYFOVRE is an injection administered by your eye doctor into the eye.

What is the most important information I should know about SYFOVRE?

Who should NOT receive SYFOVRE?
Do not receive SYFOVRE if you have an infection in or around your eye or have active swelling in or around your eye that may include pain and redness.

SYFOVRE can cause serious side effects:
Injection into the eye with SYFOVRE can result in an infection in the eye or retinal detachment (separation of retina from back of the eye) can occur.

- Call your healthcare provider right away if you have redness of the eye, eye pain, increased discomfort, worsening eye redness, blurred or decreased vision, an increased number of small specks floating in your vision, flashes of light, or increased sensitivity to light

Risk of developing wet AMD. You should be monitored for signs of wet AMD and you should report any symptoms (eg, visual distortion, deterioration in vision, black spots, loss of central vision) to your healthcare provider.

Episodes of eye inflammation. You should report any symptoms (eg, pain or discomfort, redness, swelling, or sensitivity to light, small specks floating in your vision, changes in vision) to your healthcare provider.

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Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088 or www.fda.gov/medwatch.

Where can I learn more about SYFOVRE?
For a more comprehensive review of SYFOVRE safety and risk information, talk to your healthcare provider and see the full Prescribing Information at SYFOVRE.com.

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Envato

How to prevent falls at home

Preparation, self-care vital when aging in place.

BY MICHELLE GIBEAULT TRAUB

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adults 65 and older experience 36 million falls annually, resulting in more than 950,000 hospitalizations. Falls among older adults often lead to broken bones or head injuries that impair future mobility. As such, healthy aging at home requires fall prevention.

- Starting with the basics, **clear eyesight and optimal balance** are key. Aging adults should have annual medical and vision exams so concerns can be addressed early.
- Maintaining **muscle strength**, particularly in the legs and core, is required for optimal balance. A daily walking routine, performing squats and practicing getting up from a chair can support foundational muscles. Taking a yoga or tai chi class can also help build strength and agility.
- **Proper hydration** is an often overlooked yet crucial component of fall prevention. Dehydration is especially common in older adults since the thirst mechanism declines with age. Even mild dehydration can cause dizziness, which could lead to a fall. In most cases, adults should consume 6 to 8 cups of water per day. Filling a pitcher every morning with water and drinking it throughout the day is an easy way to maintain fluid balance and a clear head.
- **Dizziness** is a dangerous side effect of some medications. This factor, along with **drowsiness**, must be considered when planning a safe medication schedule. A trusted physician or pharmacist can offer tips for timing medications so the risks of falling are minimized.
- Finally, **a safe home** is essential. Install sturdy handrails by the front door and in bathrooms, where falls are most common. Likewise, secure all rugs and cords, and eliminate clutter to avoid tripping hazards. Visit **aarp.org/homefit** for a free guide on how to make your home safer. And **cdc.gov** offers a free "MyMobility Plan" with a checklist for maintaining independence as we age.

By 2030, an estimated **1 in 5 Americans** will be **65 or older**. Of them, surveys indicate a large majority – **more than 88%** – want to remain in their home as they age.

To find community resources near you, visit the U.S. Administration on Aging's Eldercare Locator at (**800) 677-1116** or **eldercare.acl.gov**.

Aging healthily at home is possible. All it takes is some careful preparation.

Michelle Gibeault Traub is a dietitian and health writer based in Connecticut.

HEALTH & FITNESS BY JENNIFER CAMPBELL

5 benefits of drinking green tea

Green tea is known as a "superfood" and the "ultimate anti-aging drink." Made from the *Camellia sinensis* plant, green tea's leaves are unfermented, unlike black and oolong teas. This gives them the highest level of antioxidants. In Okinawa, Japan – one of the world's "Blue Zones," known for residents' longer, healthier lives – drinking green tea is a daily diet staple. Among its other benefits, green tea:

Impedes weight gain. Green tea has polyphenol antioxidants, including a catechin called epigallocatechin-3-gallate (EGCG), which may aid metabolic health and help promote weight management. According to clinical nutritionist Josh Axe, a 2009 meta-analysis of 11 studies and articles published in the *International Journal of Obesity* reported that EGCG-caffeine mixtures have a small positive effect on weight loss and maintenance.

Boosts heart health. Green tea contains beta blocking and angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors that protect against heart disease and hypertension. The bioflavonoids found in green tea have anti-inflammatory properties and are also anti-thrombogenic, anti-diabetic, anti-cancer and neuroprotective compounds.

Wards off eye diseases. Consuming more catechins may help protect the eyes from oxidative damage and vision loss.

Protects against Alzheimer's disease. By preventing the breakdown of the neurotransmitter acetylcholine, which is strongly connected with memory, green tea also inhibits the enzymes BuChE and beta-secretase, found in patients' brains.

Reduces risk of diabetes. Green tea may improve glycemic control and assist in normalizing blood sugar levels. It's believed the anti-inflammatory properties are beneficial for those at risk of, or with, type 2 diabetes, and also appear to have anti-obesity and anti-diabetic effects.

Army veteran Jennifer Campbell is a certified personal trainer with a master's degree in nutrition education. She is past commander of the California American Legion's 24th District and Hollywood Post 43.

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.

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Where friendship blossoms

International Peace Garden celebrates U.S.-Canada bond.

Veterans on the Road is an American Legion project to identify state-by-state attractions for those who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces and their families. A dedicated website is now in development to highlight historical sites, military bases with public access, sacred places, special events and routes of honor. Readers are encouraged to submit their favorite destinations at legion.org/legiontown under the category OUR TRAVELS.

ABOVE: U.S. and Canadian flags fly over the International Peace Garden. Photo courtesy North Dakota Tourism

Founded in 1932 where U.S. Highway 281 – the American Legion Memorial Highway – crosses the U.S.-Canada border in North Dakota, the International Peace Garden has more than 80,000 flowering plants, a pollinator garden, a kitchen garden that supplies fresh produce for an on-site café, test plots for new seeds, floral flags and formal gardens. In addition, the site has a conservancy and interpretive center, a historic lodge built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1937, hiking trails, and picnicking and camping sites.

Canadian Remembrance Day and U.S. Veterans Day are recognized here each Nov. 11. The U.S. and Canadian flags fly side-by-side, symbolic of a time-honored international friendship.

In August 2019, American Legion Riders on Team Legacy gathered to begin their southward centennial ride along the highway, where they rendezvoused with Team Vision coming up from the southernmost point of the highway at the Texas-Mexico border.

NORTH DAKOTA

On the Lewis and Clark Trail – Managed by North Dakota Parks and Recreation, the **Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center** near Washburn covers the expedition's stay during the winter of 1804-1805 and highlights the history of the Mandan and Hidatsa peoples, as well as the trappers, traders and other explorers. Art and history galleries and a replica of Fort Mandan, which Lewis and Clark built during their stay, are open to visitors.

National Park Service

North Dakota is one of 16 states with points of interest along the 4,900-mile **Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.** Learn more, including the locations of museums and visitor centers, at ***www.nps.gov/lecl/index.htm***.

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Fargo Air Museum Aircraft representing a century of aviation are housed at this museum, just off Interstate 29 in Fargo. Visitors can see everything from a replica 1902 Wright Brothers' glider to a modern Predator drone and other military aircraft, including a World War I-era Standard J1 trainer (the oldest airplane in North Dakota), a World War II P-51 D Mustang fighter, the Bell UH-1 Iroquois "Huey" helicopter, a B-25 Mitchell bomber and others. The museum also has military exhibits and memorabilia, an extensive library, education day camps, speakers and seminars. ***fargoairmuseum.org***

Dakota Territory Air Museum Located in Minot, this museum has a rotating display of World War II airplanes in its Flying Legends hanger, including a Spitfire, P-40E Warhawk, C-47 and many others. The outdoor display includes aircraft flown by the 5th Fighter Interceptor Squadron from 1960 to 1988 out of Minot Air Force Base. Military memorabilia, civilian aircraft and displays are included, from the early days of North Dakota aviation to Operation Iraqi Freedom and women in aviation.
dakotaterritoryairmuseum.com

Theodore Roosevelt National Park President Roosevelt's days as a cattle rancher in North Dakota's Little Missouri badlands are revived in this unique national park. His courtship with the area started with a buffalo hunting trip in September 1883. By the end of that 15-day visit, he purchased the first of two ranches in the area. He moved there in the summer of 1884 following the deaths of his wife and mother. Roosevelt sold the last of his ranching interests by 1898 but later said he would not have been president had it not been for his experience in North Dakota. Today, the national park includes three separate parcels:

- The North Unit is 50 miles from Interstate 94. Called the Grand Canyon of the Little Missouri, it's known for rugged beauty, wildlife and camping.
- The South Unit includes the Maltese Cross Cabin, Roosevelt's first ranch home, which is open for viewing at the South Unit Visitor Center.

National Park Service

- The Elkhorn Ranch Unit is the site of Roosevelt's remote home ranch along the Little Missouri River. Only the foundation stones remain from the cabin.

Theodore Roosevelt National Park also has the third-highest concentration of petrified wood in the United States and is one of few national parks where visitors can see free-roaming horses.
Note: There are no lodging, dining or other services available in the park.
nps.gov/thro/index.htm

National Buffalo Museum Founded in 1991, this museum houses a 10,000-year-old bison skull, a complete skeleton of an ancient ancestor to the modern buffalo, and the Buffalo Hall of Fame. There's also a collection of pioneer buildings known as Frontier Village and live buffalo grazing on the grounds. Stage-coach and pony rides also are part of the summer offerings. ***buffalomuseum.com***

ROUTES OF HONOR

North Dakota State Highway 22 from the South Dakota border to the junction of State Highway 23 is recognized as **Veterans Memorial Highway**, established in 2019.

American Legion Memorial Highway's northernmost miles end in North Dakota. The nearly 1,900-mile route along U.S. 281 was officially dedicated in 1960, also passing through the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas, connecting Canada with Mexico.

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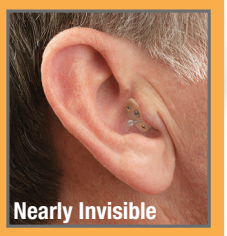

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A vote of **no confidence**

Election officials fight to gain the trust of a divided electorate.

BY ALAN GREENBLATT

Envato

If you watched HBO's "Succession," you'll remember the scenario, where some 100,000 ballots went up in flames in Milwaukee in a key episode. Given Wisconsin's swing-state status in the show – as well as in real life – this triggered a legal and political nightmare in terms of knowing who legitimately won the presidential election.

How likely is something like that in reality? Election officials lie awake at night worrying about problems that could cause real doubt. Election centers are equipped with sprinklers in part to protect ballots from arsonists, to cite one example. More generally, election officials draw up all kinds of contingency plans to safeguard ballots and their counting.

They faced a welter of challenges in 2020: a global pandemic, historically high turnout, serious disinformation campaigns and legal challenges lodged even before votes were cast. For the most part, they met those challenges. It was "the most secure in American history," according to a bipartisan council of federal and state election security officials. "It felt like everything that could happen was thrown at election officials in that election, and they responded with extraordinary success," says Derek Tisler, a democracy counsel at New York University's Brennan Center for Justice.

That's the good news. The bad news is that tens of millions of Americans don't believe it. A poll released in July found that less than half the country has confidence that the vote in next year's presidential election will be counted accurately. There was a notable partisan divide in that poll: Only 22% of Republicans expressed high confidence about 2024, compared with 71% of Democrats.

Red versus blue Voting – and the counting of votes – has become one of the most partisan issues in a divided country. Since 2020, states run by Democrats have moved to make voting easier, in many cases codifying experiments run during the pandemic. Last year, for example, Massachusetts made no-excuse mail voting a permanent feature, while expanding both the number of early voting days and the registration period. Republicans complain that Democrats are sacrificing security to expand access in ways that help their own cause.

"Democrats have decided that voter fraud benefits them politically," said Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas. "They're willing to go to any length to tear down the reasonable, common-sense protections that protect the integrity of our elections."

Red states, by contrast, have passed dozens of election security bills since the 2020 election. Some have reduced the availability of ballot drop boxes, increased voter identification requirements for absentee ballots or voting in general, prohibited drive-through voting, and banned private funding to assist election administration. Others have created election-fraud criminal task forces. "Our new election crimes office has sprung into action to hold individuals accountable for voter fraud," Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said last year. "If you commit an elections crime, you will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

30%
Share of local election officials who say they have been abused, harassed or threatened
Source: Brennan Center for Justice

1 million
Workers needed nationwide to run presidential elections
Source: Election Assistance Commission

159,738,337
Total ballots cast and counted in 2020
Source: US Elections Project

Given the absence of widespread voter fraud – academic analysts and courts have found few actual examples – Democrats accuse Republicans not only of whipping up hysteria but using fraud claims as an excuse to suppress voters, particularly groups that tend to support Democrats such as African Americans and college students. There have indeed been cases where red states may have gone overboard. Texas, for example, passed a law in 2020 requiring counties to replace their vote-counting equipment with machines on which data, once entered, could not be modified. That would have cost counties more than $100 million. The real problem, however, is that the type of technology required by the state does not exist. The legislature repealed the requirement this year.

If red states have sometimes been guilty of throwing the kitchen sink at election fraud issues, Democrats have also turned the dial up to 11 in terms of warning about the

69%
Voters in 2020 who cast ballots by mail or before Election Day
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

8
States with all-mail balloting (plus Washington, D.C.)
Source: National Conference of State Legislatures

65%
Active-duty military personnel who voted by mail in 2020
Source: Federal Voting Assistance Program

Voting by mail

Mail voting is essentially a military invention. Pennsylvania allowed soldiers to vote from the field during the War of 1812. It was an idea that Abraham Lincoln, worried about his absent supporters, actively encouraged during the Civil War. By 1864, 19 Northern states and six Southern states allowed soldiers to vote absentee, and at least 150,000 did.

Allowing military personnel, their families and civilians overseas to vote is one reason mail voting will likely never be eliminated. "We do prioritize our military and overseas voters," says Christy McCormick, who chairs the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. "They're serving our country overseas and on bases in this country, and they deserve a voice in the way the country's run, the country they're protecting."

Mail voting became controversial in 2020, when President Donald Trump suggested it not only invited but practically guaranteed cheating. He called the idea of sending out absentee ballots to all voters – not just those who requested them – "a whole big scam." Trump and other critics say that absentee ballots can be selectively harvested, with operatives filling in some and tossing those from voters on the other side. (The one time something like this happened, involving a North Carolina congressional race in 2018, the cheating was detected quickly and Republicans won the do-over election after their original candidate had been disqualified.)

Republicans have traditionally been fans of mail voting. There was no partisan gap in absentee voting in 2016 or earlier elections. "For many years Republican operatives had perfected the art of organizing and encouraging absentee ballots, because so many seniors like to vote by mail and tended to vote Republican," says Whit Ayres, a GOP consultant.

The question is how things will look going forward. Since 2020, several states have tightened their security requirements for absentee ballots, involving things like signature matches and personal identifiers such as driver's license numbers or the last four digits of Social Security numbers. Other states remain more lax.

The share of voters casting mail ballots dropped from 43% in 2020 to 32% last year. That's still a historically high number. Republicans, having criticized the method in 2020, now seem to recognize it's a game they can't afford to not play.

"The rules are the rules," said GOP Gov. Glenn Youngkin of Virginia, where state elections are being held in November. "We are going to drive early voting and absentee ballots, and we are not going to be behind on Election Day."

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consequences. In 2021, President Joe Biden called a new Georgia election security law "Jim Crow 2.0," and Major League Baseball (MLB) moved its All-Star Game out of Atlanta amid widespread accusations of voter suppression. Then, in 2022, Georgia saw high turnout during the midterm election with voters experiencing an average wait time of about two minutes.

"We showed everyone that it is easier to vote in Georgia, but it is hard to cheat," said Brad Raffensperger, Georgia's Republican secretary of state. Atlanta is now "in the mix" to host the 2025 All-Star Game, according to MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred.

37%
Eligible citizens who voted in 2018, 2020 and 2022 Source: Pew Research Center

13
States that gained or lost votes in the Electoral College following the 2020 census Source: *The New York Times*

The "winner effect" If elections have generally been run smoothly and there's been no evidence of fraud sufficient to change outcomes – while complaints about increased security disenfranchising voters have also been exaggerated – why are so many Americans still unhappy with the system?

There have always been complaints about cheating around elections. After the contested 1876 election, Democrats referred to President Rutherford B. Hayes as "His Fraudulency," rather than "His Excellency." The reputation for cheating in Chicago is rooted in some historical realities. Robert Caro devoted an entire 560-page volume of his biography of President Lyndon B. Johnson to LBJ's apparent theft of a 1948 Texas Senate race.

More recently, Democrats were disturbed by the "hanging chad" election of 2000, when George W. Bush was elected president thanks to a 537-vote margin over Al Gore in Florida. Counting continued for more than a month until the Supreme Court brought it to a halt.

Political scientists have a polite term for when people feel cheated by the outcome of elections. They call it the "winner effect," but really it's about sore losers. "Voters have lower confidence in an election when their side loses," Tisler says. "People want an answer that confirms their biases and they go searching for it."

It's become more common for politicians themselves to claim they've been cheated. After losing the 2018 governor's race in Georgia, Democrat Stacey Abrams refused to concede, claiming the outcome was illegitimate because Republican Brian Kemp had removed so many voters from the rolls as secretary of state. And former President Donald Trump has spent the past three years complaining that the 2020 election was rigged against him. Many Republican officials have echoed those complaints.

In the courts, where the standards of evidence are much higher than in the media, claims of fraud have repeatedly been dismissed. More than 50 lawsuits were filed by the Trump campaign in the wake of the 2020 election, with judges – many appointed by Trump himself – throwing them out. "Every fraud claim I was asked to investigate was false," says Ken Block, head of one of two private firms Trump himself hired to find examples.

"Plaintiff's evidence and arguments do not clear the bar," wrote a judge dismissing a case brought by Kari Lake, the losing GOP nominee for Arizona governor last year, who claimed irregularities in that state's largest county.

Post-election audits sponsored by Republican legislatures in states including Arizona and Wisconsin were unable to find evidence that results had been skewed in Biden's favor. In June, a Michigan judge fined state GOP officials nearly $60,000 for filing a lawsuit claiming voter fraud in Detroit without being able to present evidence. In April, Fox News agreed to pay Dominion Voting Systems $787.5 million to settle a defamation lawsuit after the network aired allegations about the election machine company's purported role in a global conspiracy.

"The facts are very clear, verified by courts – including Trump-appointed judges and other Republican-appointed judges," says David Becker, founder of the Center for Election Innovation & Research, which consults with election officials.

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repeatedly verified by audits, Becker says. The reason doubt is so resilient, he adds, is that some of the people claiming election fraud are able to raise money by fanning the flames. "They're tapping into the severe disappointment of tens of millions that their candidate lost. It's not as lucrative to say, 'I lost this election, let's try harder next time.'"

44%
Americans who say they are confident that votes will be counted accurately in 2024
Source: AP News

1900
The last time the turnout of eligible voters exceeded that of 2020

Evaporating trust Contemporary elections have also gotten closer and feel more important. It's not new for official vote counts to linger on for days and weeks, but suspense becomes suspicious when the overall outcome remains in doubt. "We're a very divided nation," says Christy McCormick, who chairs the federal Election Assistance Commission. "The closer the election the more you're going to be skeptical, unless your candidate wins."

That's especially true in an era when both parties spend most of their time claiming the other side will drive the country into ruin. Those kinds of charges, as well as false claims about fraud, spread far and wide and quickly via social media. Many are propelled, as Becker suggests, by malicious actors, including foreign governments. In addition to being highly partisan, this is an era when trust in institutions – whether schools or news media, Congress or the courts – is in decline.

"The No. 1 thing in an election system is trust," says Michael Adams, the Republican secretary of state in Kentucky. "If you don't have trust, you don't have anything."

Adams was able to defeat a pair of challengers in his state's primary election in May who denied the validity of the 2020 presidential vote. He also helped shape legislation that is unique these days: bills that have heightened security while also increasing access. Kentucky may be the only state in the South that has made voting easier since 2020, increasing absentee and early voting, while also addressing issues with chain of custody of ballots, signature discrepancies and voting tabulation methods.

"In Kentucky, we have the trust of both halves of the electorate," Adams says. "Democrats trust me not to suppress the vote, while Republicans know that I believe in security."

One thing does worry Adams, however. The top local election officials in 23 of Kentucky's 120 counties decided not to run for re-election this year. That's a high rate of attrition, but it's in keeping with quits all over the country. According to the Brennan Center, 12% of local election officials are new in their jobs since 2020, while another 11% intend to leave prior to next year's election. There are 10,000 separate jurisdictions running elections across the country. A lot of them only have one or two full-time staffers. That means if someone leaves, nearly all the institutional knowledge walks out the door with them.

"You're losing people and you have to train new people," Adams says. "If they make mistakes, all that does is feed conspiracy theories."

Election offices are now routinely flooded with complaints about procedures or outcomes – even in counties where winning margins are too enormous ever to be in doubt. That is, when they're not being bombarded with threats. Heider Garcia, the top election administrator in Tarrant County, Texas, testified before the Senate about receiving death threats, with one saying his "lifeless body (should) hang in public until maggots drip out his mouth." Garcia resigned from his job in June. "Their best-case scenario for doing a great job is anonymity – that on a Wednesday after an election, no one is talking about problems," Becker says. "Now, their worst-case scenario, even if they run a great election, is that they're going to be targeted and even hunted by extremists who are mobilized and incited by people telling them lies."

Garcia was widely respected within the field. "If you were building a prototype for an election administrator, you would just copy Heider Garcia," Texas Secretary of State John Scott, a Republican, said last year. Despite his vilification, he worked hard to win over skeptics, giving tours of his

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office and running workshops so doubters could see how the process works. He met with skeptics in person and over Zoom, setting up screens so more people could watch the vote count in real time. Given the temper of the times, many election administrators are similarly striving to make their work more transparent. "The more people see the way elections are run, up close, the better," McCormick says.

Distrust is bred by uncertainty. Vote counts dragging on for days makes people wonder if outcomes are somehow being manufactured. The Public Interest Legal Foundation, which promotes election integrity laws, calls for absentee votes to be accepted and counted no later than Election Day. As a model, they point to Florida – which, after 2000, overhauled its election administration and now consistently is among the first states to report results. "When Americans go to bed on election night 2024, they should know who the next president is and who their elected leaders are going to be," says Lauren Bowman, the foundation's director of media affairs. "Restoring the confidence in elections is so important, and that happens with the results coming in quickly and efficiently."

Alan Greenblatt is a senior staff writer with Governing.

The Electronic Registration Information Center

Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose held a news conference in February to discuss the ways his state was making elections more transparent and secure. One indispensable tool, he said, was ERIC, or the Electronic Registration Information Center, a data-sharing effort among states. "It is one of the best fraud-fighting tools we have," said LaRose, a Republican.

By the following month, he'd changed his mind. LaRose announced that Ohio was joining other red states – nine so far – in leaving ERIC. One of the ways states combat fraud is by keeping their registration rolls up to date, purging voters who have died or moved to other jurisdictions. The only ways they know if a voter has moved to another state is if either the voter or that state tells them. At its peak, ERIC made such information available among 30 states.

ERIC, though, also requires states to send out information to eligible citizens that they should register to vote. Last year the Gateway Pundit, a right-wing site, published a series of posts claiming that ERIC received funding from liberal billionaire George Soros and was sharing voter information with groups on the left. "They seem to be partnering with other (nonprofits) that seem to have a left-wing agenda," says Matt Braynard, who directs Look Ahead America, a conservative group that combats election fraud.

John Merrill, a Republican who served as secretary of state in Alabama until January, says all these charges are false. Merrill was part of a group of secretaries of state who wanted to audit ERIC to address some of the concerns. That didn't happen in time to stop the exodus. ERIC is now a prime target for conservatives. "It's going to leave you in a position of not having a tool you can use to prevent voter fraud," Merrill says. "It's going to be a major concern for states that are concerned with election integrity."

ERIC – or something like it – fulfills a real need, says Braynard, a former Trump campaign official. But he contends that aside from the accusations of bias, it's gotten too expensive and burdensome for states. A system such as ERIC should be federally mandated, he suggests, although he's not confident that red and blue states will continue collaborating on such efforts. "I think there is a red-blue divide in the country," Braynard says, "where you end up with two different systems."

This circle of distrust is why Michael Adams is thinking about leaving ERIC. Adams, the Republican secretary of state in Kentucky, is concerned that the quality and amount of data he'll gain access to will necessarily diminish, while his dues as a remaining state could suddenly spike. For those reasons, he's considering giving up a tool that has helped Kentucky remove 300,000 errant registrations from its rolls. "Our value proposition becomes a lot lower," Adams says. "It's got nothing to do with George Soros. It has to do with access to information."

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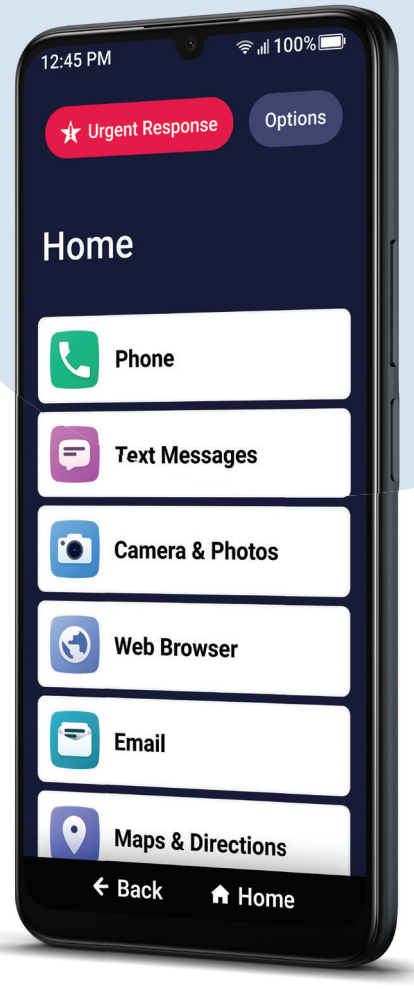

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‘Our uniforms … and then our suits’

Guard, reserve officer aims to bridge gaps between cybersecurity and military.

BY LAURA EDWARDS

Photo courtesy Dan Kunze

In June, Dan Kunze – vice chairman of Task Force Movement (TFM), the White House initiative launched in April 2022 to connect servicemembers and veterans to careers in understaffed fields – appeared on the American Legion Tango Alpha Lima podcast (**legion.org/tangoalphalima**) to talk about TFM and its mission of creating career pathways for the military-connected community.

High among today’s most pressing economic issues is cybersecurity, an industry in urgent need of skilled professionals to protect sensitive information from digital threats. Veterans, often trained in high-level information technology and carrying security clearances, are uniquely suited to fill a critical gap that has some 700,000 openings.

“Our ability to export goods, services, people, thoughts and ideas relies on the infrastructure of national security, and our national security relies on the culture of innovation that American manufacturing and industry provides,” Kunze said on the podcast. “How do we create our own talent pool to support our national security and our business environments?”

At the 103rd American Legion National Convention in August 2022, TFM added cybersecurity to its original mission focus: commercial truck driving, another industry in critical need, with a shortage of 60,000 to 100,000 drivers. Kunze plays a lead role in the effort, having formerly served as TFM’s technology adviser. Technology has been part of his expertise in both the private sector and as an

Task Force Movement is actively seeking industry, education and government partners to join the mission to better connect the military community and veterans with opportunities in cybersecurity. For more information about apprenticeship programs and other opportunities for veterans, visit **taskforcemovement.org/cybersecurity**.

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officer in the Pennsylvania National Guard and Army Reserve.

He says he felt "called to serve" after the 9/11 attacks, when he was 15, and joined the National Guard halfway through law school. Kunze's understanding of the military and business has given him insight into ways industry and defense can better collaborate, not only for the good of veteran job candidates but for the nation as a whole.

Bringing together a diverse set of stakeholders – military, industry, academia, government and veterans service organizations like The American Legion, which has a seat on the TFM Steering Committee – has been a priority of the initiative. The Legion has worked for decades to improve the landscape for veterans seeking to convert their military training into credits toward certifications and licenses in specialized civilian career fields.

"We have a really skilled set of Guard and reserve members with really sophisticated skill sets," Kunze says. What they learn in the military can be applied in civilian jobs – and they can take back to the military the latest business ideas. Translating between the two arenas means acknowledging that they are usually organized quite differently – for example, the "linear and hierarchical" tradition of the military versus the "horizontal and free flow" approach to technology. That can be a challenge for those coming out of the U.S. Armed Forces.

For more seamless military-to-civilian transitions, both sides have changes to make, Kunze adds. Military occupational specialties should be "not so different" from civilian jobs in technology, and new approaches from the armed forces can better poise newly discharged veterans for civilian careers. "You can't only start thinking about it at the end," Kunze says.

He calls for giving the civilian sector earlier access to military systems, and for creating earlier opportunities to contribute – particularly for Guard and reserve members who, like him, have a foot in both worlds.

Nurturing technological talent among servicemembers benefits both the economy and veterans seeking post-service careers, Kunze notes. "Our technology is the result of human creativity, which relates to cultivation of experience and where they're from," he says. "If we don't have our own pipeline, we miss an opportunity to create value for ourselves."

$112,000
Median annual salary of a cybersecurity professional, according to the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Careers and Studies

In an environment where innovation and competition flourish, those traits will flourish in people as well.

Kunze advises those serving the military today to "value the relationships (you foster), maybe more than the work, because those are networks that will last you for life."

Communication, on both sides of the civilian-military line, is vital to close the employment gap in cybersecurity, and veterans can help by reaching out to younger counterparts who are about to separate or who are new to life after the uniform "who might not even know they need it."

That approach can go a long way to assist those who served in their transition to meaningful careers that meet a crucial need, as Kunze has done, on both sides of the divide: "We can wear our uniforms, and then we can wear our suits."

Laura Edwards is associate editor of The American Legion Magazine.

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Servant Leader

National Commander Dan Seehafer says a strong American Legion means more members rolling up their sleeves – starting with him.

Photo by Jeric Wilhelmsen

BY MATT GRILLS

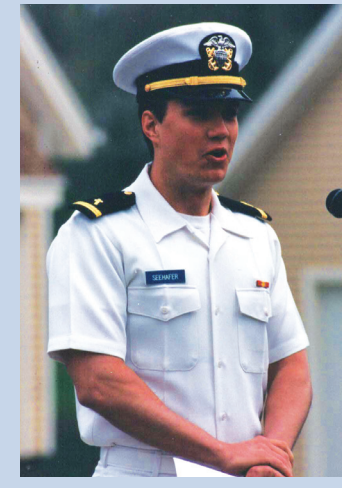
Looking around the sanctuary of St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Horicon, Wis., the Rev. Dan Seehafer beams.

Morning light streams through stained-glass scenes from Jesus' life as Seehafer recalls his early days here, when he helped clear the land for this building and its school.

For nearly 25 years, Seehafer has led this congregation, baptizing members, administering communion, officiating weddings and funerals. Behind him, a carved altar from the church's original building connects the last century to this one, along with paintings, a lectern and a pulpit.

This pulpit is where Seehafer feels most at home – and grateful to be doing exactly what, since seventh grade, he's believed he was meant to do: serve God in full-time ministry and, by extension, serve others.

"It's easy to cut a check, but what if you put your whole self into that offering plate?" he says. "That was my mindset."



His father served in the Army, but Seehafer's decision to join the military was largely inspired by a seminary professor – Daniel Gard, who went on to become a rear admiral – and a couple of classmates.

"I could use the training I had and go in as clergy, so that was very appealing to me. Instead of sitting in a church office and saying to people, 'Come to me,' as a chaplain, we went to them."

In 1995, Seehafer was commissioned as a naval officer and enrolled in the chaplaincy program, serving in San Diego, Everett, Wash., Newport, R.I., and aboard USS *Paul F. Foster*, as well as with Marines at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

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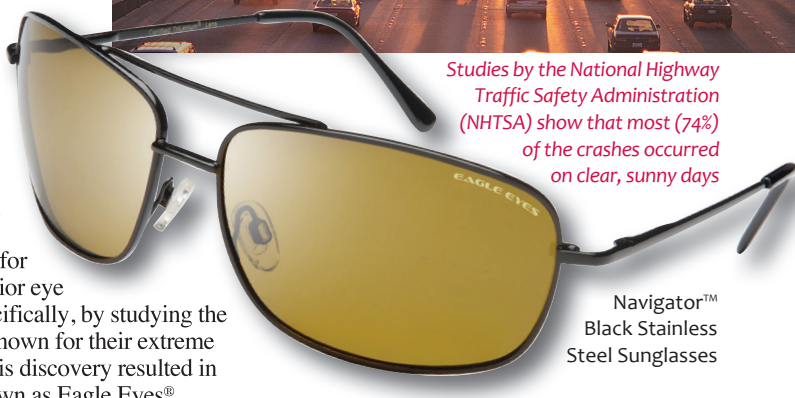

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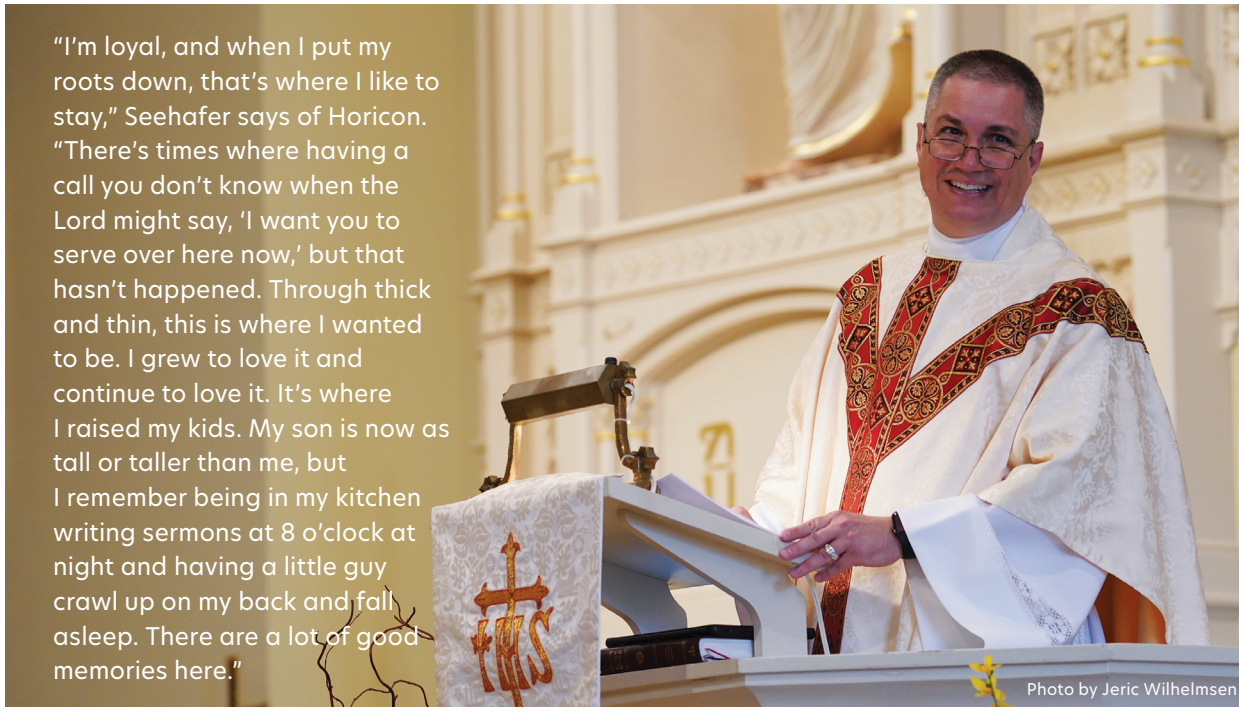
"I'm loyal, and when I put my roots down, that's where I like to stay," Seehafer says of Horicon. "There's times where having a call you don't know when the Lord might say, 'I want you to serve over here now,' but that hasn't happened. Through thick and thin, this is where I wanted to be. I grew to love it and continue to love it. It's where I raised my kids. My son is now as tall or taller than me, but I remember being in my kitchen writing sermons at 8 o'clock at night and having a little guy crawl up on my back and fall asleep. There are a lot of good memories here."
Photo by Jeric Wilhelmsen

For the next year, Seehafer is filling a different pulpit, as national commander of The American Legion. Elected at the 104th National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., in August, the pastor and former Navy chaplain is spreading the word about the organization's top priorities – in particular, the Be the One initiative to reduce the veteran suicide rate. He's also set on boosting membership, to strengthen the Legion's influence on Capitol Hill and in communities nationwide.

Seehafer's approach to leadership is "others first" – an attitude he thinks is contagious and, ultimately, the key to post growth. Every time a member steps up to take charge of a program or event, every time a member reaches out to a veteran who is hurting or at risk, they make a difference, he says.

"I truly believe this organization impacts lives like no other. It changes lives, and it saves lives. As I always say, it's personal."

Seehafer grew up in Merrill, Wis., riding bikes with friends, playing sports and attending parochial school. Then came the Sunday he knew he wanted to become a pastor. He can't recall what the sermon was about, but he does remember thinking, "You know, I'd preach that *this* way."

In high school, he focused on speech and writing classes. With the support of his parents and grandparents, Seehafer went to Concordia University in Mequon, Wis., to study pastoral ministry and then to Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind., for his master's in divinity. "It was a family effort," he says.

Some of Seehafer's professors and classmates planned to become military chaplains, and he began to consider it himself. After a few months of studying in Tallinn, Estonia, he applied for a commission in the Navy.

He loved his time in uniform, Camp Pendleton especially. The assignment started rough, with a gunnery sergeant grumbling to Seehafer that the previous chaplain had been worthless, and how he probably would be no different.

The Marines invited Seehafer and another chaplain to accompany them on a 10-mile hump, carrying packs weighing up to 80 pounds. Muster was at 0400; they showed up at 0330. "You're not gonna make it," they were told flatly.

"That motivated me," he says. "Don't raise your eyebrows when you say 'chaplains.'"

They did make it, and encouraged and helped the Marines who struggled. "That wall, that barrier, was gone after that," Seehafer says. "They wanted us at everything."

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The Seehafers love to be outdoors, and they love a weekend getaway. One of their goals is to upgrade their 6-foot-by-8-foot ice fishing "starter home" to what's called an Ice Castle.

"There's just something about putting down a tip-up and the flag going off and finding out what's under there," he says. "Could be a northern, could be a bass, could be a walleye."

When the weather's right, Seehafer likes to head to Fox Lake, set up with some music and snacks, and try to catch a good dinner. "He's a master at frying fish," Stacey says.

Don't ask for his recipe, though. "Pastoral confidentiality," he quips.

Photo by Jeric Wilhelmsen

After the military came Seehafer's greatest adventure: parenthood. His son Jacob, 18, is in college; Emma, 14, is entering high school. Busy as Seehafer might be, "there's never a time he puts anything on the back burner," says his wife, Stacey. "He doesn't miss a beat, whether it's the church, the Legion or his family."

Seehafer knows it would be easy to get burned out, given how much listening a pastor does. "There's joy in that, but I also hear a lot of bad," he says. "I do need time just to recharge. Usually it's in a tree stand, a blind, a fishing boat. I love being out in nature, God's creation."

His other refuge is American Legion Post 157 in Horicon, where he's been a member since 1997. "People ask me, 'You're there for everybody else. Where do you go?' That post was the greatest asset I had, just the warmness when I'd walk through the door. They call me commander, Dan, Rev, Chaps. I have a lot of nicknames. Bottom line, that's my escape. It's been healing, too, and energizing."

Years ago, during Post 157's remodel, Seehafer put in sweat equity with other members, installing insulation and shoveling out snow as they waited for a new roof to arrive. He takes pride in the grounds too, putting in new mulch and helping with other landscaping work. "I have an investment in this place, absolutely."

Jim Kell, a Vietnam War Navy veteran and member of Post 157, has known Seehafer since he came to Horicon. Through the church and the Legion, they've grown close as brothers. "When I lost my wife to cancer, he brought me back to what's important," Kell says. "He's gone that mile for others, and I'd do the same for him."

Pat Bulman, Post 157's facilities manager, is the one who recruited Kell. Both have served at the post, district and county levels, and encouraged Seehafer's Legion career. From his start as post adjutant to department commander to national chaplain, he's primed for the top job.

"I think he's in tune with the Legion's needs," Bulman says. "We've got to get ourselves in touch with the younger veterans, and sometimes you have to make hard decisions that way. We've got to make the Legion viable for the next 100 years."

To those who'd put off joining, Seehafer says there's an urgency to belong now, to be part of the family. "You can still be that cardholder. What you're doing is giving power to our voice."

Yet the Legion's work is personal too, and more hands are needed. "I'm not sitting back. We can't wait. Who will be the one to answer that call from someone in need? We could save a life."

Matt Grills is managing editor of The American Legion Magazine.

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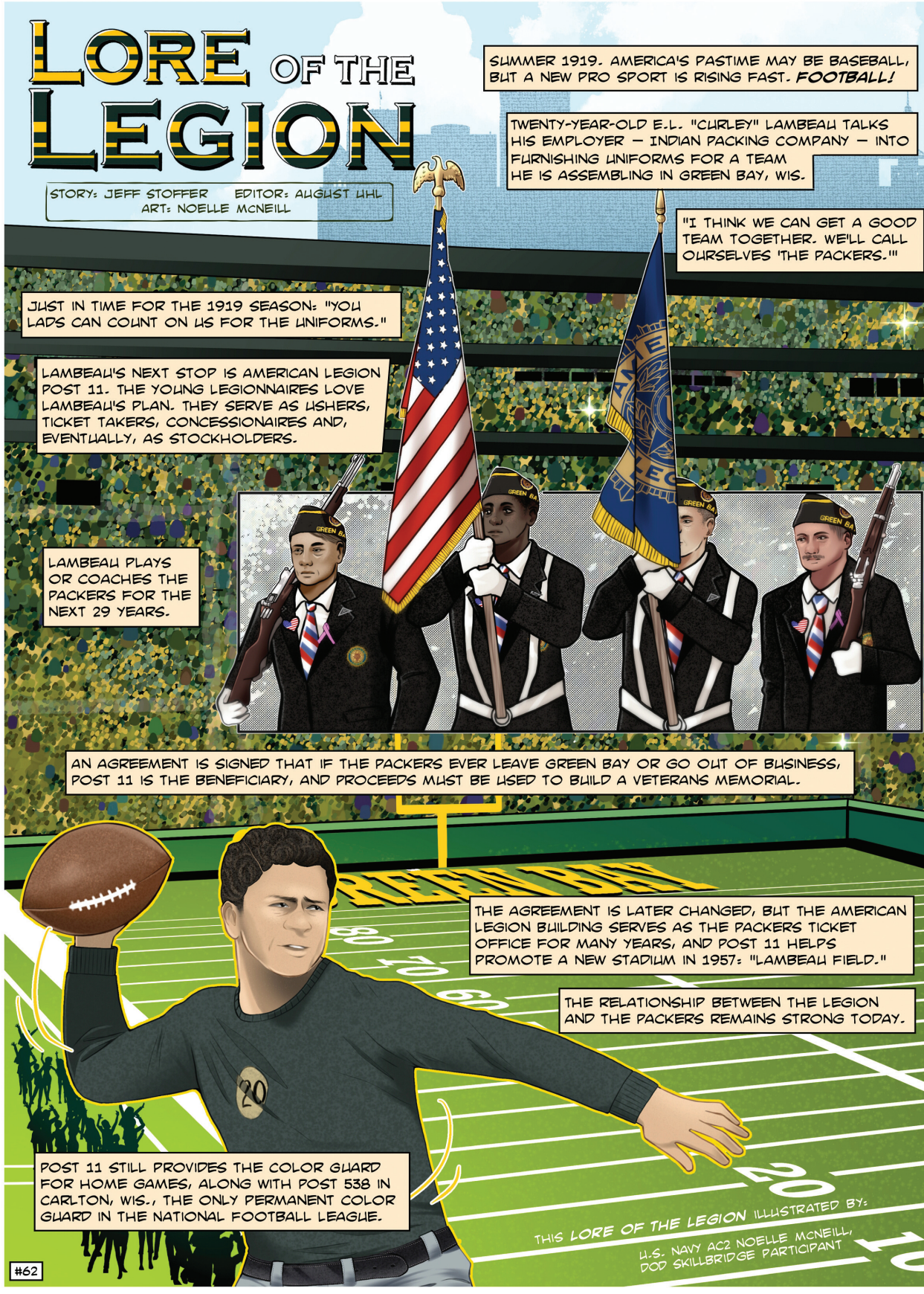
LORE OF THE LEGION
STORY: JEFF STOFFER EDITOR: AUGUST UHL
ART: NOELLE MCNEILL
SUMMER 1919. AMERICA'S PASTIME MAY BE BASEBALL, BUT A NEW PRO SPORT IS RISING FAST. FOOTBALL!
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THE AGREEMENT IS LATER CHANGED, BUT THE AMERICAN LEGION BUILDING SERVES AS THE PACKERS TICKET OFFICE FOR MANY YEARS, AND POST 11 HELPS PROMOTE A NEW STADIUM IN 1957: "LAMBEAU FIELD."
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POST 11 STILL PROVIDES THE COLOR GUARD FOR HOME GAMES, ALONG WITH POST 538 IN CARLTON, WIS., THE ONLY PERMANENT COLOR GUARD IN THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE.
#62
THIS LORE OF THE LEGION ILLUSTRATED BY:
U.S. NAVY AC2 NOELLE MCNEILL, DOD SKILLBRIDGE PARTICIPANT

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Photo by Hilary Ott

Milley: 'Be true to yourself and your north star'

Though not a Boys State or Boys Nation alum himself, Gen. Mark Milley eagerly accepted an invitation to speak at this year's Boys Nation session – thought to be the first time a sitting chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has addressed the program in its 77-year history.

Milley spoke for about 20 minutes before taking questions. He then posed for a group picture with the 100 Boys Nation senators and staff before individual photos.

Among the keys to success, Milley told the young men, are competence and commitment. "All (competence) requires is hard work, diligence, studying and lots of repetitive practice," he said. "(Commitment) comes from inside, and you're going to have to be committed to whatever walk of life you choose. By that, I mean you have to be enthusiastic, you have to embrace it, you have to be all in, in whatever profession you choose to be in."

Milley also urged the group to be courageous – both physically and morally – as they enter adulthood. "My message to you is that each of you will become leaders of consequence in the United States of America, there's no question about it," he said. "As you go on into the years ahead, look yourself in the mirror, examine your conscience, and be true to yourself and your north star. Maintain your integrity. Never, ever turn your back on it."

– Andy Proffet

"If we were able to achieve unity as a bunch of teenage boys, that could send a message to the people at Capitol Hill that they should too."

Photo by Hilary Ott

2023 American Legion Boys Nation President David Daniel II of Kentucky, on his campaign message

Photo by Hilary Ott

Senators at the 77th American Legion Boys Nation – hosted by Marymount University in Arlington, Va., July 21-29 – drafted and submitted 122 bills, including measures to support teachers, improve mental health care and reduce suicide rates.

The week also included visits to monuments and memorials on the National Mall, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Capitol Hill (along with American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation senators) to speak with their congressional senators, and American Legion Post 136 in Greenbelt, Md., for a dinner. They also toured the Legion's Washington, D.C., headquarters, the Victims of Communism Museum and Ford's Theater. The session concluded with a graduation dinner and ceremony at Marymount.

Watch highlights from the 2023 Boys Nation session: ***legion.org/boysnation***

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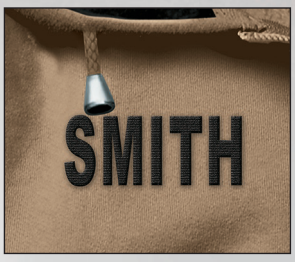

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Junior cadet counselors from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point talk with Navy Cmdr. Hunter Scott, a 2002 Boys Nation alum, at this year's session. Photo by Hilary Ott

'Every boy in America ought to go to Boys State'

A tradition at American Legion Boys Nation is that exemplary delegates not elected to one of the top offices may be invited back for the next three years to serve as junior counselors.

Navy Cmdr. Hunter Scott was invited back for just one year as a "JC," but that experience provided a lesson in leadership he'd never forget. "(I learned that) for me to be an effective leader, I first need to be comfortable with myself," he told this year's session. "And then I would have the intention to not focus on myself but on the people I would be responsible for leading."

As special assistant to Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley, Scott accompanied the four-star general to Boys Nation, giving him a chance to reminisce about his experience at Florida Boys State and then Boys Nation in 2002, as well as his summer as a Boys Nation staffer in 2003.

"When I came to Boys Nation, I was, I think, a very good delegate," Scott recalled. "I always tried to sit in the front, ask engaging questions, develop relationships with the other boys ... I loved it. And I think the counselors took notice of that, too, because I was invited back to be a counselor."

That next chapter of his Boys Nation story did not turn out as well. "I was a terrible counselor," Scott admitted. "Upon many years of being able to reflect on this ... I wanted to be well liked and thought of as cool more than I wanted to be, to use Navy words, 'in command,' or responsible for good order and discipline and making sure these boys got the most out of the program."

Yet Scott remains an ardent supporter of the programs. "I think every boy in America ought to go to Boys State, and if you can, Boys Nation," he said. "They are really, really incredible programs. It doesn't matter what your dreams or goals are; for me, you can see a direct line to Boys State or Boys Nation, and my path as an officer in the military .... we all feel the decisions of our government. So, whether we are directly involved, we've got to know how the process works."

Acknowledging the Pentagon's ongoing recruiting challenges, Scott encouraged Boys Nation senators to be willing to consider the military as a career.

"The longer I've been in, the more I love it," Scott said. "Being able to protect our democracy and fight to preserve our values all over the world ... that is really important to me. I recommend everyone in high school or college, or at any point, be open-minded to the military, because it is a really wonderful life."

- Andy Proffet

"I know he wasn't very closely related to me, but to see someone who knew people I'm related to ... it puts a name and face to the war."

Henry Pahlow of Maribel, Wis., who found the name of his father's second cousin on the Vietnam Memorial Wall: Robert J. Schley, a Marine corporal who died in combat in 1967 at 23

Photo by Hilary Ott

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65	$34.75	$25.50	$68.50	$50.00	$102.25	$74.50	$169.75	$123.50
66	$35.90	$26.35	$70.80	$51.70	$105.70	$77.05	$175.50	$127.75
67	$37.05	$27.25	$73.10	$53.50	$109.15	$79.75	$181.25	$132.25
68	$38.70	$28.95	$76.40	$56.90	$114.10	$84.85	$189.50	$140.75
69	$39.75	$30.60	$78.50	$60.20	$117.25	$89.80	$194.75	$149.00
70	$43.85	$32.45	$86.70	$63.90	$129.55	$95.35	$215.25	$158.25
71	$45.60	$34.25	$90.20	$67.50	$134.80	$100.75	$224.00	$167.25
72	$47.70	$36.00	$94.40	$71.00	$141.10	$106.00	$234.50	$176.00
73	$50.90	$38.95	$100.80	$76.90	$150.70	$114.85	$250.50	$190.75
74	$53.50	$41.85	$106.00	$82.70	$158.50	$123.55	$263.50	$205.25

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D614451 PB615067

League City's ALWS title a first for Texas

League City, Texas, Post 554 made a first-inning run stand up for a 1-0 victory over Lincoln, Neb., Post 3 in the 2023 American Legion World Series (ALWS) championship game on Aug. 15 on Veterans Field at Keeter Stadium in Shelby, N.C. The result gave the Lone Star State its first champion in the series' 96-year history.

Left-hander Jacob Cyr, who threw the third no-hitter in ALWS history in the opening game, was sharp again while throwing his second shutout in six days, before a national ESPN television audience. He allowed six hits, but worked out of jams in the third and fourth innings behind some exceptional defensive plays.

Lincoln catcher Garrett Springer, who got the first hit off Cyr in the 2023 series with a two-out single to right field in the first inning, came closest to scoring when he pulled a 2-0 pitch foul over the left field fence with two runners on in the third inning. Post 3 was trying to win a second ALWS title for Nebraska, and the first since 1939.

"It feels great to be able to take this back to Texas for the first time, and especially being able to do it with my brothers on this team," said Cyr, who was named George W. Rulon American Legion Player of the Year in a postgame awards ceremony.

In 2022, League City's pool-play finale loss to champion Troy, Ala., Post 70 ended their season. But Cyr and four other returning players won the Western Regional again this season to make a return to Shelby with the goal of a better finish.

"This is something I've been wanting for 37 years, and I finally got it," said Ronnie Oliver, who has coached League City since 2005 and previously coached Texas City (Texas). "We just find that way. We've had one of those years where we found a way to be successful."

– Richard Walker

Watch 2023 ALWS video highlights and see a list of award winners: ***legion.org/baseball***

ABOVE: *Noah Ferraro of League City Post 554 and Matthew Leahy of Brooklawn, N.J., Post 72 make contact at second during Game 14.*

LEFT: *League City Post 554 players celebrate their championship win over Lincoln, Neb., Post 3.*

Photos by Chet Strange

“I haven’t been this excited since I got my first bicycle!”

Introducing the new ZOOMER!

The portable, folding, battery-powered chair that offers easy one-handed operation

Remember when you were a child and got your first bicycle? I do. It gave me a sense of independence... I felt like I could go anywhere, and it was so much easier and more enjoyable than walking. Well, at my age, that bike wouldn’t do me much good. Fortunately, there’s a new invention that gives me the freedom and independence to go wherever I want... safely and easily. **It’s called the Zoomer, and it’s changed my life.**

> “My Zoomer is a delight to ride! It has increased my mobility in my apartment, my opportunities to enjoy the out-of-doors, and enabled me to visit the homes of my children for longer periods of time. The various speeds of it match my need for safety, it is easy to turn, and I am most pleased with the freedom of movement it gives me.”
>
> - A. Macon, Williamsburg, VA

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WORKS INDOORS AND OUT

Turns on a dime for tight spaces. And works on grass and small gravel. The Zoomer can travel up to eight miles on a single charge. It has multi-terrain wheels that can handle 10° inclines, grass and small gravel. It fits under a table, so you can drive right up and enjoy yourself at home or in town.

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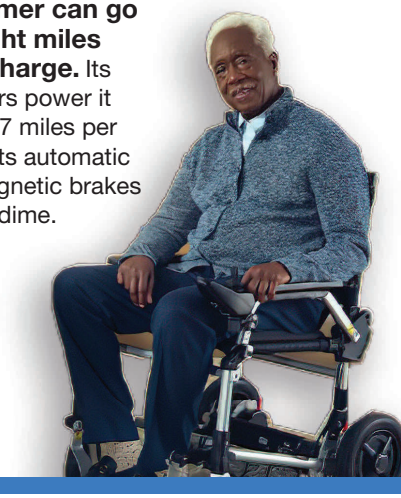
Folds flat in seconds and weighs just 49.8 lbs. Its sturdy yet lightweight aluminum frame makes it durable and comfortable. Its exclusive foldable design enables you to transport and store it easily. You can now detach the back wheel and motor so the heaviest piece you have to lift weighs only 26 pounds!

LONG-LASTING BATTERY

The Zoomer can go up to eight miles on one charge. Its dual motors power it at up to 3.7 miles per hour and its automatic electromagnetic brakes stop on a dime.



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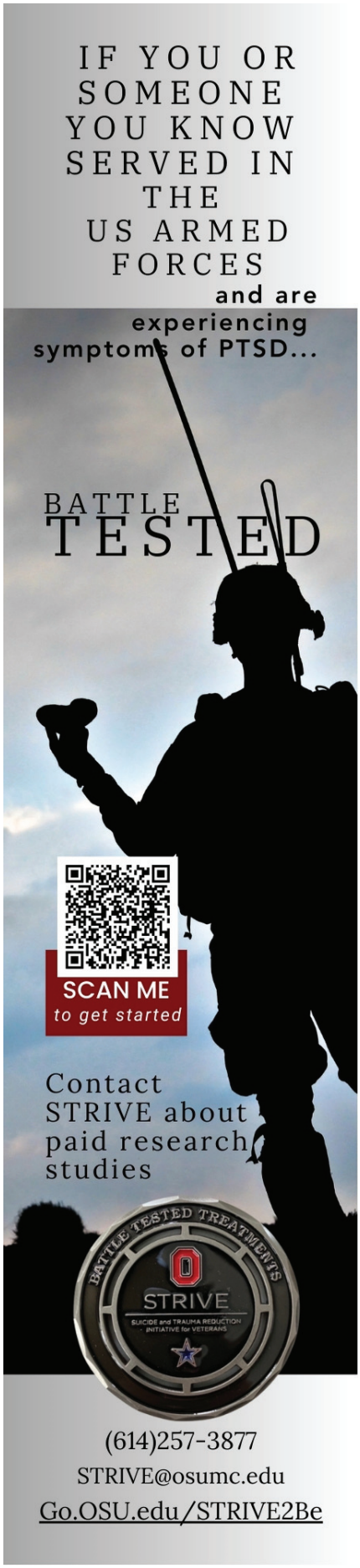

THE JOB FRONT BY WENDY S. ENELOW

Are your résumé and LinkedIn profile boring your audience?

While your career marketing materials may not read like a thriller, neither should they put your readers to sleep. Take a hard look at your documents and see if they are guilty of any of these writing flaws that cause readers to lose interest and conclude that there's "nothing special" about you.

Snoozers Given skills and attributes, likely to appear in your "About" (summary) section where you try to list everything you're good at.

Strategy: Avoid them. Snoozers can often be omitted entirely. If your job title is finance director, don't state that you have "strong financial skills." Use your summary to tell readers something impressive and distinctive, rather than something they already know or are likely to deduce.

Yawners Lengthy descriptions of daily activities.

Strategy: Consolidate them. Hiring managers don't want to read a job description; they want to know what you did in that job and the value you delivered, not what you were "responsible for" or what your "duties" included. It is helpful to convey the overall scope and functions of your job, but you can do that concisely in a short paragraph or even a one-liner below your job title. For example:

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Member, 6-person executive team | $35M annual revenue | 4 direct reports | 16 account managers nationwide

NETWORK MANAGER, DIGITAL SYSTEMS
Systems consulting group: 15 developers, 5 QA specialists and 30+ additional technologists per project

Sleepers Clichés and other terms – "results-driven," "accomplishment-oriented," "proven track record" – that are so overused they make little impact.

Strategy: It's more powerful and memorable to share relevant accomplishments and specific results you delivered. That way, you convey your "proven track record" without having to use overworked terms.

Above all, remember to write for human readers and not solely (or even primarily) for automated résumé scanners. A résumé with all the right keywords and experience may rise to the top, but if the full content is not compelling, unique and relevant, hiring authorities will not be impressed enough to contact you.

Wendy Enelow is co-author of "Modernize Your Résumé: Get Noticed … Get Hired" and other titles.
wendy@wendyenelow.com

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ON POINT

THE AMERICAN LEGION IN WASHINGTON

H.R. 4569 – VETERAN SERVICE RECOGNITION ACT

"All members of our armed forces deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Noncitizen veterans, just like their American peers, make the ultimate sacrifice in service of the United States."

U.S. Rep. Maria Elvira Salazar, R-Fla., after joining seven other lawmakers to reintroduce the Veteran Service Recognition Act on July 13

45,000
Approximate number of immigrants currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces

The Veteran Service Recognition Act would allow noncitizen servicemembers to apply for naturalization during basic training, establish a review process for those in removal proceedings, and provide an opportunity for noncitizen veterans who have been removed or ordered removed, and have not been convicted of serious crimes, to obtain legal permanent resident status.

This legislation, which passed the House in the 117th Congress and is now before the 118th, is supported by American Legion Resolution 15, "Expedited Citizenship Through Military Service," originating from the National Security Commission.

The American Legion has joined with other organizations in joint letters to congressional leaders in support of legislation to accelerate the U.S. citizenship process for immigrant members of the armed forces.

Scan this QR code with the camera on your smartphone to visit The American Legion's Grassroots Action Center, or go to **legion.org/legislative** and click on the Grassroots Action Center box.

Army

Caissons not rolling for a while

The Army has extended its suspension of providing horse-drawn caissons for military funeral honors at Arlington National Cemetery, Military.com reports. The 3rd Infantry Regiment's Caisson Platoon announced an initial 45-day suspension in April but has extended the pause through mid-2024, after a review found that 27 of 48 horses had muscle and joint injuries and hoof issues, requiring rehabilitation.

MY GI BILL VETERANS & EDUCATION BY VALERIE HEFFNER

Chapters 31, 33 not mutually exclusive

Q: *I am currently attending the University of Oklahoma using the Chapter 31 Veterans Readiness & Employment benefit and am enrolled in the bachelor's of nursing program. Once I have completed my degree, I would like to enroll in the master's program. I'm not sure how many months of benefits I will have used by then. Is it possible to use Chapter 33 Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to complete my master's?*

A: Chapter 31 provides 48 months of eligibility once approved. Effective April 1, 2021, a new regulation allows a veteran to have both benefits since Chapter 31 is an employment program and Chapter 33 an education program. If you used 48 months of Chapter 31 and then apply for Chapter 33, you may receive an additional 36 months of full-time benefits if you have not yet used those education benefits before. To receive them, you must apply at **va.gov**. Once VA receives your application, you will be notified of how many months of Chapter 33 entitlement remain.

Valerie Vigil is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Apache Junction, Ariz. ***askvalerie@legion.org***

To My Grandson Personalized Valet Keepsake Box

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Youth compete in the Legion's 32nd Junior 3-Position Air Rifle Championship.

West Virginia, South Carolina youth win air-rifle titles

Jacob Wisman of Independence, W.Va., and Charles Bratton of Clover, S.C., took first place in the Precision and Sporter categories at the American Legion Junior 3-Position Air Rifle Championship, held July 22 at the USA Shooting Range at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Wisman is a high school senior who wants to continue competitive shooting in college. Bratton is a freshman at Harvard University studying to become a brain surgeon. The two received $5,000 scholarships from The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion, and were invited to the 104th National Convention in Charlotte, N.C.

For their second-place finishes in the Precision and Sporter categories, Gracie Dinh of Huntsville, Ark., and Nathan Krokstrom of Cape Coral, Fla., received $1,000 scholarships provided by the American Legion Auxiliary.

– Cameran Richardson

Watch coverage of the Legion's Junior Air Rifle Championship: ***legion.org/magazine/videos***

ABOVE RIGHT: Charles Bratton, left, Sporter champion, and Jacob Wisman, right, Precision champion Photos by Jennifer Blohm

Precision

1. Jacob Wisman, Independence, W.Va., 2,481.4
2. Gracie Dinh, Huntsville, Ark., 2,481.1
3. Griffin Lake, Emmaus, Pa., 2,477.1
4. Caroline Martin, Nemo, Texas, 2,476.6
5. Megan Jaros, Roseville, Minn., 2,476.2

Sporter

1. Charles Bratton, Clover, S.C., 2,318.4
2. Nathan Krokstrom, Cape Coral, Fla., 2,300.1
3. Hope Dobek, Des Moines, Iowa, 2,285.8
4. Abril DeCastro, Fort Mill, S.C., 2,285.4
5. Kees Vadergriff, Fort Mill, S.C., 2,276.6

Russia's disappearing scientists

Vladimir Putin's wars of aggression, cratering economy and relentless assault on freedom have triggered a diaspora of Russian scientists. In the past five years, Russia has lost more than 50,000 scientific researchers, *The Moscow Times* reports, citing the Russian Academy of Sciences. Equally problematic for Russia: the number of scientists in Russia younger than 30 has decreased by 25% over the past 10 years, portending long-term problems in the science and technology fields. There are now fewer than 340,200 scientists in Russia – down from 992,000 in 1991, when the USSR collapsed.

4,000
Drive-in theaters in 1959

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Drive-in theaters in 2000

321
Drive-in theaters in 2023

Source: The Holiday Story

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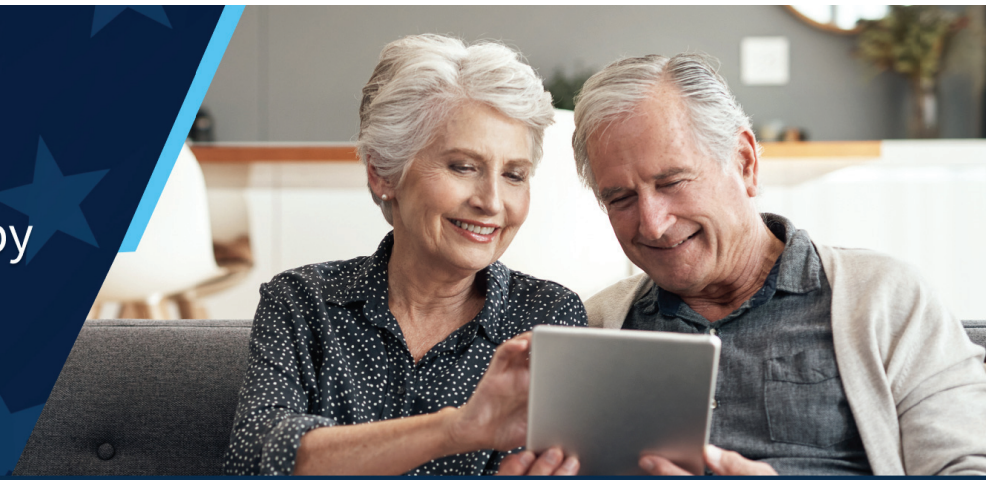

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BERGMANN & MOORE: CAMP LEJEUNE JUSTICE ACT

Correcting misconceptions about PACT Act, Camp Lejeune Justice Act

Courtesy Bergmann & Moore

Is there a deadline for filing a PACT Act versus a Camp Lejeune Justice Act (CLJA) claim?
There has been substantial confusion and misinformation surrounding PACT Act "deadlines." Many law firms' websites still have inaccurate information related to this issue, as they are unfamiliar with the acts. Here are answers to the most frequently misunderstood questions:

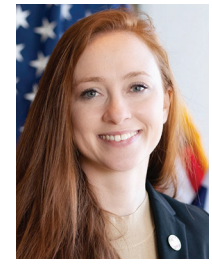
- There is **no deadline** to file a PACT Act claim through VA. Simply put, you can always contact an accredited service officer to file a claim.
- The "deadline" being tossed around referenced filing an "Intent To File" (ITF). If you filed an ITF by 11:59 p.m. Eastern on Aug. 14, 2023, that ensured your benefits (if ultimately approved) will date back to the implementation date of the PACT Act – Aug. 10, 2022 – in essence giving you a bonus year of benefits and a year from the date of the ITF to finalize your claim.
- Under **no** circumstance does this date prevent you from filing for PACT Act benefits in the future. Your claim will simply be considered from the date you filed rather than the implementation date.

The CLJA, included as a provision under the PACT Act, separately allows individuals exposed to toxic water at Camp Lejeune to sue the U.S. government for damages/benefits. As we have often stated, a CLJA claim is different/separate from a VA claim. For these claims, there is a **sunset provision (end date)**, meaning you must file a CLJA claim by Aug. 9, 2024. As always, we encourage any individual impacted by toxin exposure at Camp Lejeune to contact their accredited American Legion service officer for advice.

Has Congress capped fees on CLJA litigation?
No. Despite significant efforts from veterans service organizations, Congress has not capped fees on CLJA mass tort cases. In practice, this means many veterans and family members exposed to toxic water are being charged anywhere from 40% to 60% in attorney fees, **plus costs,** for CLJA claim representation.

For this reason, The American Legion entered into a memorandum of understanding with the national law firm Bergmann & Moore LLC. Under this agreement, Bergmann & Moore has agreed to limit attorney fees and costs to 33.33%. This ensures that, regardless of costs accrued throughout the course of litigation, any claimant represented by Bergmann & Moore will receive no less than 66.67% of any CLJA benefit granted.

*If you are interested in filing a CLJA claim, call **(800) 898-9450** or fill out the form online at **camplejeunelitigationteam.com/al**.*



*If you have questions before filing a claim, contact Elizabeth Hartman, Bergmann & Moore's CLJA liaison with The American Legion, at **(252) 497-7255**.*

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[1]Vaughan CP, Johnson TM 2nd, Goode PS, Redden DT, Burgio KL, Markland AD. Military exposure and urinary incontinence among American men. J Urol. 2014 Jan; 191(1):125-9. doi: 10.1016/j.juro.2013.07.016. Epub 2013 Jul 16. PMID: 23871759.

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Envato

End your year well with tax preplanning

Get a head start on your year-end tax planning with these tips, reviewing this year and setting yourself up for an easier 2024:

Did you sell securities, real estate or a business? Consider planning strategies to avoid capital gains tax.

Did you have extra medical expenses? Establish a health savings account (HSA).

Did you deal with high state taxes, property taxes or medical bills? Accelerate your deductible expenses.

Do you expect to be in a lower tax bracket, or can you control your income? Shift income to 2023.

Do you own an IRA and/or 401(k)? Maximize your deductible contributions.

Do you have investment losers? Sell to offset the winners, and lower your capital gains tax.

Do you expect to be in a higher tax bracket in 2024? Talk to your CPA or adviser to find solutions to manage taxes.

Here are some ways to turn your tax dollars into charitable dollars and support The American Legion heading into 2024:

- **IRA charitable rollover** or, if you're 70½ or older, a gift from your IRA
- **Outright gift of an asset**
- **Donor-Advised Fund (DAF)**
- **Zero-tax gift and sale**

For questions about planned gifts or end-of-year planning strategies, contact the Legion's Office of Charitable Giving at **(317) 630-1225**, **plannedgiving@legion.org** or **legion.giftlegacy.com**.

"We stand behind you at this time of bereavement and will support determined action on your part. We urge you to seek out and severely punish the perpetrators of the heinous bombing of our brave Marines."

Then-American Legion National Commander Keith Kreul, in a telegram to President Ronald Reagan on Oct. 24, 1983, the day after suicide bombers drove a truck into a Marine Corps barracks in Beirut; the Marines were part of a U.N. peacekeeping force in Lebanon. The initial response from the White House was that there would be no change in the U.S. role.

On Oct. 25, U.S. forces invaded Grenada. The Legion expressed strong support for Reagan's actions in both countries. Kreul told reporters he found it "appalling that some Americans believe we should cut and run from Lebanon," and the Legion launched a letter-writing campaign to show support to U.S. servicemembers in Lebanon and around the world.

In February 1984, U.S. troops withdrew from Lebanon. In remarks after the State of the Union address on Jan. 25, Kreul said, "The reality … is that the presence of our Marines in Beirut has, in fact, been a stabilizing influence in the Middle East, and last year we unequivocally stated we believe the United States and other members of the multinational peacekeeping force should remain there."

Rescue crews search for casualties following the 1983 barracks bombing in Beirut.
Marine Corps

ADVERTISEMENT

AGING IS NATURAL, GIVING UP ON YOUR VIRILITY ISN'T!

BRING BACK THE BEST YEARS OF YOUR LIFE ... HERE'S HOW ONE MAN DID IT!

Although this would otherwise be an embarrassing subject – I feel strongly about sharing my recent experience with others my age. Simply put, I'm 57 years old and even though I'm in good health overall, my body just doesn't respond like it used to. Intimacy and virility have become an issue.

Recently, I found myself struggling to "perform". I began losing my confidence and with it, my sense of "male-prowess". I was feeling a great deal of pressure and embarrassment. My wife was beginning to think it was something she did or didn't do – it wasn't.

I wasn't comfortable discussing my situation with anyone – not even my doctor – so in a desperate attempt to find some help, I privately did some research on the web.

First, I found that many HEALTHY men experience a decrease in virility with age. I wasn't alone! Good blood circulation is the key to maintaining virility, and there are a number of factors that can weaken it.

Armed with this new information, I began to search through the many "male enhancement" products on the net. I found a pill and patch for everything and anything, but one product stood out among them – **MAXODERM** is completely different! Not a pill or a patch, this surprisingly effective topical formula is delivered directly to the "source" – when I needed it most. Best of all, **MAXODERM is recommended by a Leading Physician**, but you don't need a prescription. I don't need to swallow a pill, prescription or not, or wear some kind of patch on my shoulder!

After trying **MAXODERM** just once, I could actually feel it immediately. It felt incredible! **I LITERALLY STARTED FEELING IT IN UNDER 60 SECONDS!** What a difference! I couldn't believe it – virility like I haven't felt in years! My driver's license says I'm 57, but thanks to **MAXODERM**, my wife says I'm 25 again! It feels great! I now know it's normal to experience some problems with virility at my age, but **MAXODERM** let me deal with it naturally. No pills – no patches – and even better – no embarrassing appointment with the doctor.

Try **MAXODERM.** You'll feel it working immediately and get back to living your life now!

Jim S.
Miami, FL

FREE MONTH SUPPLY!*
CALL 1-800-440-9286

P.S. I'm pretty sure you can still get a **FREE MONTH SUPPLY** of **MAXODERM** with your order by calling **1-800-440-9286** or by visiting their website **www.TryMaxodermNow.com**. Oh, and even better, this product is backed by a **30-Day Money Back Guarantee!** So call while supplies last you (and your partner) will be glad you did!

RECOMMENDED BY A LEADING PHYSICIAN
"Reviewing the scientific data, I've found **MAXODERM's** unique topical formula and usage plan can truly generate a healthy impact on male arousal and performance."

Individual results may vary. If you have a health condition, please consult your healthcare provider prior to use. These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. The information featured above has been compiled from actual letters we've received from a few of our many satisfied customers.

Photo by Lucas Carter

Vietnam Women's Memorial to mark 30th anniversary

To commemorate the 30th anniversary of the dedication of the Vietnam Women's Memorial in Washington, D.C., a weekend of events will honor the 265,000 women veterans – military and civilian – who served during the Vietnam era.

Hosted by Eastern National in coordination with the Vietnam Women's Memorial Advisory Group, the National Park Service and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, programs will include a candlelight ceremony at 6 p.m. Nov. 10 and a storytelling program at 10 a.m. Veterans Day. The weekend will culminate in a 1 p.m. ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, where the annual Observance at the Wall will be dedicated to the Vietnam Women's Memorial's 30th anniversary.

The keynote speaker will be Diane Carlson Evans, chair of the Vietnam Women's Memorial Advisory Group and founder of the Vietnam Women's Memorial. A former Army combat nurse and Vietnam War veteran, she led a 10-year mission to build the memorial on the National Mall. The Vietnam Women's Memorial was the first in the nation's capital to recognize the military service of women, as well as the patriotic service of civilian women. In 2021, Carlson Evans received The American Legion's Distinguished Service Medal for her decades of veteran advocacy. She is a life member of Lewis & Clark Post 2 in Helena, Mont.

Anniversary events are open to the public and will be held at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The candlelight and storytelling programs will take place at the Vietnam Women's Memorial statue, 300 feet from the Wall.

vietnamwomensmemorial.org

To learn more about Carlson Evans' efforts to build the memorial, visit **dianecarlsonevans.com**.

Global nuclear stockpile grows

World 9,576 (+86 over 2022)
Russia 4,489 (+12 over 2022)
United States 3,708 (unchanged)
China 410 (+60 over 2022)
Britain 225 (unchanged)
France 290 (unchanged)
Pakistan 170 (+5 over 2022)
India 164 (+4 over 2022)
Israel 90 (unchanged)
North Korea 30 (+5 over 2022)

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

DoD draws line for Hollywood

The Department of Defense (DoD) has updated its rules for collaborating with filmmakers "to prohibit any assistance to directors who plan to comply or will likely comply with censorship demands from the Chinese government," POLITICO reports.

DoD "will not provide production assistance when there is demonstrable evidence that the production has complied or is likely to comply with a demand from the government of the People's Republic of China ... to censor the content of the project in a material manner to advance the national interest of the People's Republic of China," according to a Pentagon directive obtained by POLITICO.

The new policy is an outgrowth of language inserted into recent legislation by Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, who says he's "cautiously optimistic" that studios will "make the right choice and reject China's blackmailing."

Weird Herb Shocks Doctors With Relief of Leg and Feet Pain, Burning, Tingling, Numbness

6 clinical studies show it is effective. Lost but now re-discovered. Thousands of new users report amazing relief from leg and feet problems in just 30 to 90 days – with no side effects. Available in all 50 states without a prescription.

By Michael Plane –
National Health Press

A re-discovery from the 1600s is causing a frenzy within the medical system. A weird herb has been shown in six clinical studies (and by thousands of users) to be very effective for leg and feet pain, burning and numbness – with no side effects – at low cost – and with no doctor visit or prescription needed.

This weird herb comes from a 12-foot tall tree that grows in Greece and other countries in Europe. In the old days, people noticed that when their horses who had leg and feet problems ate this herb – it was almost like magic how quickly their problems got much better. They called it the "horse herb". Then somehow with Europe's ongoing wars, this herbal secret got lost in time.

"It works for people who've tried many other treatments before with little or no success. Other doctors and I are shocked at how effective it is. It has created a lot of excitement" says Dr. Ryan Shelton, N.D.

Its active ingredient has been put into pill form and improved. It is being offered in the United States under the brand name Neuroflo.

WHY ALL THIS EXCITEMENT?

Researchers have found an herb originally from Greece that has been shown in six placebo-controlled medical studies (543 participants) to be effective and safe. This natural compound strengthens blood vessel walls and reduces swelling to stop the pain and suffering.

Poor blood flow in the legs and feet is one of the common problems that develops as we age. Millions of Americans suffer from neuropathy and chronic venous insufficiency (CVI), edema, and other leg/feet problems – millions have these but are undiagnosed.

Today's treatments don't work for a high percentage of people – and they have side effects that make them hard to tolerate or that people do not want to risk. This includes prescription drugs, over the counter pain pills, surgery and compression.

Already popular in Europe, this natural herb is taking America by storm since it was announced last week.

HOW IT WORKS

Here's why you have pain now: Your arteries have weakened. Your arteries can't carry enough blood, nutrients and oxygen down to your legs and feet. This damages your nerves and causes your burning, tingling and numbness.

The herbs in the pill Neuroflo strengthen your arteries that carry blood, nutrients and oxygen to your feet and legs. It improves your circulation so oxygenated blood goes to the nerves and repairs them. This makes your nerves grow stronger so your pain fades away and your legs and feet feel much younger again.

Until now, scientists could not combine these herbs into one pill without losing their full potency, but finally, they have succeeded.

Katerina King from Murrieta, California says, "I had hands and feet tingling and snapping and burning feeling. It made my life very uncomfortable. I had a hard time walking, my legs felt like they each weighed 50 pounds. Once I got in my car and my feet felt so heavy I couldn't even drive the car. With Neuroflo I have no more tingling, cold or burning painful legs and feet. It went away."

WHAT DOCTORS ARE SAYING

"I have been recommending NeuroFlo to my patients for years, and I have been very impressed with the results. It is a safe and effective way to relieve the pain and discomfort of neuropathy. I highly recommend it," says Dr. James Leaper, M.D.

Dr. Ryan Shelton, N.D. says "This is new and different. It works for people who've tried many other things before. It is natural with no side effects. Don't give up hope for your leg and feet pain, burning, tingling and numbing. This pill is working for countless people after other treatments have failed them. I highly recommend it."

"NeuroFlo has been a game-changer for my patients with leg and foot pain. Its natural formulation, backed by scientific research, sets it apart from other supplements. I have witnessed significant improvements in my patients' symptoms and overall well-being. NeuroFlo is a safe and effective solution worth considering," said Dr. James Leaper, M.D.

RE-DISCOVERED LEG AND FEET PROBLEM SOLUTION: *In Greece in the 1600s, this herb was originally called "horse herb" because it was fed to horses with ailing legs. It has now been re-discovered and is giving soothing comfort to Americans who have leg and feet pain, burning, tingling and numbness.*

Now you can get a good night's sleep - peaceful, restful sleep – with no pain, tingling, zinging, itching or zapping. Improve your balance and coordination. No side effects – safe to take with other medications. Enjoy your favorite activities and hobbies again. Be more active, have more fun, enjoy life more. Don't risk irreversible damage to your feet and hands. Don't let it get dangerously worse.

Neuroflo is GUARANTEED to work for you – or you will get full refund with a 90-day unconditional money-back guarantee. It is NOT sold in stores or online. No prescription or doctor visit is required.

50% OFF FOR THE NEXT 10 DAYS

This is the official release of NeuroFlo for readers in the state. Therefore, everyone who calls within the next 10 days will receive 50% OFF their first order. A toll-free hotline number has been set up for local readers to call for this 50% OFF savings. The number will be open starting at 7:00 am today and only for the next 10 days.

All you have to do is CALL TOLL-FREE **1-888-205-1713** and provide the operator with the special 50% OFF discount approval code: **NEF158**.

Important: Due to Neuroflo's popularity and recent media exposure on ABC, CBS and FOX NEWS, phone lines are often busy. If you call and do not get through immediately, please be patient and call back. Those who miss the 10 day deadline for 50% OFF will have to pay more for Neuroflo.

These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Results based upon averages. If you have a medical condition or are taking pharmaceutical drugs, consult your doctor before use. Models are used in all photos to protect privacy. All doctors were remunerated for their endorsement. All studies performed were independent and third party.

FOCUS ON FINANCES BY J.J. MONTANARO

Guiding words to achieve financial fitness

There's no easy-to-follow recipe for lifelong financial success, as our financial priorities, needs and plans change over the years. However, one of the things I've learned working in financial planning and education is that if you can break the seemingly complex or overwhelming into bite-size pieces, it can become manageable and achievable.

In that spirit, I offer these three guiding words for each decade of a working life:

10s: Learn the basics. There is more emphasis than ever on teaching kids the basics of finances, but there is still work to do. Personal-finance programs and classes for your kids or grandkids are great, but the really "sticky" lessons are the ones they pick up at home.

20s: Good habits rule. While it's likely too early to map out the details of your retirement goal a half-century in the future, it's not too early to contribute to a Roth IRA, get the full match from an employer's retirement plan, live with a spending plan, responsibly manage debt, periodically evaluate insurance and build an emergency fund.

30s: Avoid lifestyle creep. Typically, this is the decade we start to make some real financial headway. We get established in the workplace, reap promotions and pay increases, and enjoy a little wiggle room. The key here is to enjoy the fruits of your labor – just not all of them. Use that wiggle room to carve out additional savings, pay off debt and enhance your standard of living.

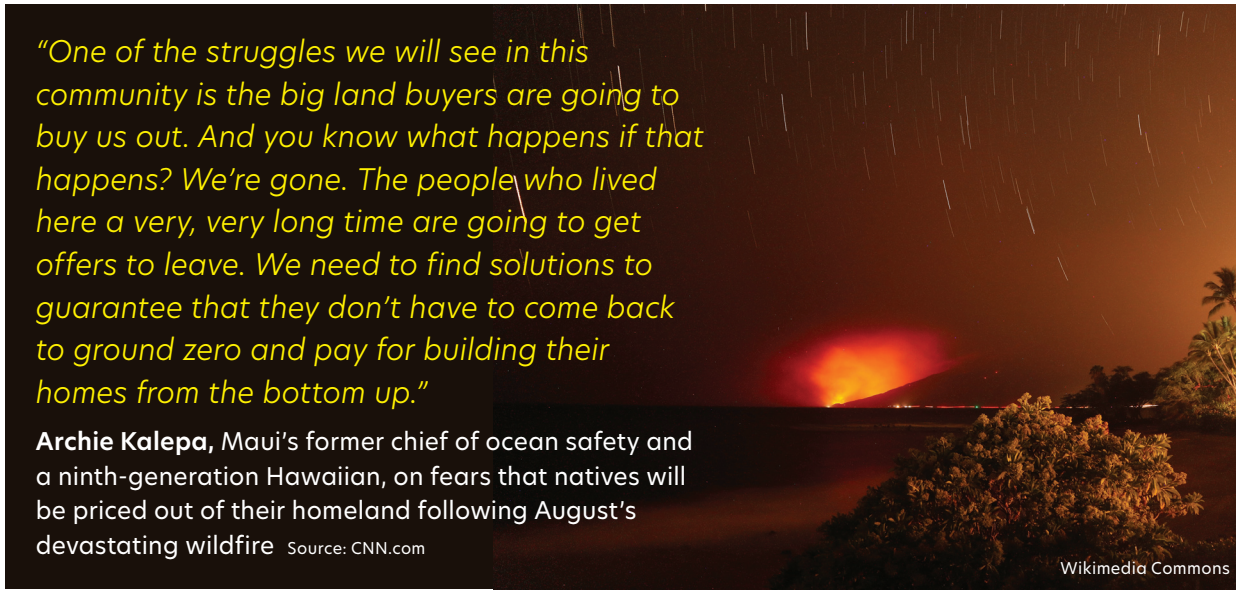
40s: Build, build, build. This is the decade to get serious about retirement savings, make savvy decisions relative to college funding for your kids, pay off debt and start to accelerate your finances. According to investment giant Fidelity, you should have accumulated about six times your annual income to be on track by the end of this decade. That's going to take serious speed.

50s: Get it down. What you want the future to look like is coming into focus. Financially, that vision comes with a price tag, and you will need an action plan to get you from point A to point B.

60s: Arrange your affairs. Wills, trusts, powers of attorney, Social Security timing strategy, life insurance and retirement plan beneficiary designations, and asset ownership all need to be done to ensure they are accurate, up to date and in line with your wishes. Don't put it off.

Today, more and more Americans – over a fifth, according to some studies – are working in their 70s and beyond. Put these sets of words into action so that will be a choice and not a necessity.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. ***legion.org/usaa***



"One of the struggles we will see in this community is the big land buyers are going to buy us out. And you know what happens if that happens? We're gone. The people who lived here a very, very long time are going to get offers to leave. We need to find solutions to guarantee that they don't have to come back to ground zero and pay for building their homes from the bottom up."

Archie Kalepa, Maui's former chief of ocean safety and a ninth-generation Hawaiian, on fears that natives will be priced out of their homeland following August's devastating wildfire Source: CNN.com

Wikimedia Commons

ADVERTISEMENT

Scientific Discovery Stuns Doctors

Biblical Bush Relieves Joint Discomfort in as Little as 5 Days

Legendary "special herb" gives new life to old joints without clobbering you. So safe you can take it every day without worry.

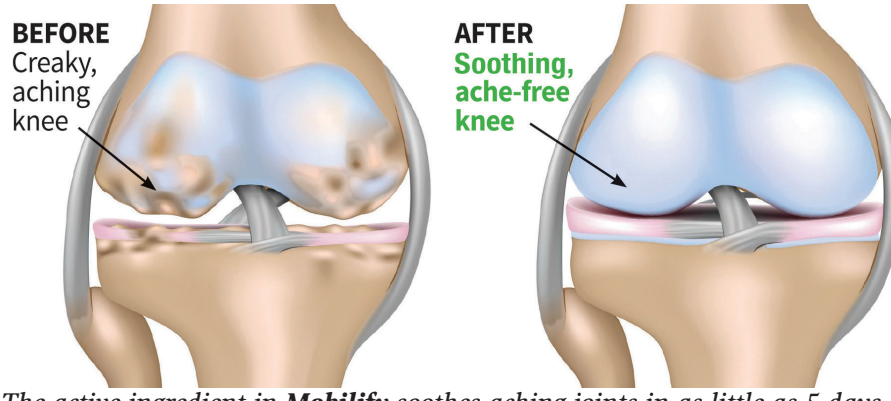
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 54 million Americans are suffering from joint discomfort.

This epidemic rise in aching joints has led to a search for alternative treatments—as many sufferers want relief without the harmful side effects of conventional "solutions."

Leading the way from nature's pharmacy is the new "King of Oils" that pioneering Florida MD and anti-aging specialist Dr. Al Sears calls "the most significant breakthrough I've ever found for easing joint discomfort."

Biblical scholars treasured this "holy oil." Ancient healers valued it more than gold for its medicinal properties. Marco Polo prized it as he blazed the Silk Road. And Ayurvedic practitioners, to this day, rely on it for healing and detoxification.

Yet what really caught Dr. Sears' attention is how modern medical findings now prove this "King of Oils" can powerfully…



*The active ingredient in **Mobilify** soothes aching joints in as little as 5 days*

Deactivate 400 Agony-Causing Genes

If you want genuine, long-lasting relief for joint discomfort, you must address inflammation. Too much inflammation will wreak havoc on joints, break down cartilage and cause unending discomfort. This is why so many natural joint relief solutions try to stop one of the main inflammatory genes called COX-2.

But the truth is, there are hundreds of agony-causing genes like COX-2, 5-LOX, iNOS, TNK, Interleukin 1,6,8 and many more—and stopping just one of them won't give you all the relief you need.

Doctors and scientists now confirm the "King of Oils"—Indian Frankincense—deactivates not one but 400 agony-causing genes. It does so by shutting down the inflammation command center called Nuclear Factor Kappa Beta.

NK-Kappa B is like a switch that can turn 400 inflammatory genes "on" or "off." A study in Journal of Food Lipids reports that Indian Frankincense powerfully deactivates NF-Kappa B. This journal adds that Indian Frankincense is "so powerful it shuts down the pathway triggering aching joints."

Relief That's 10 Times Faster… and in Just 5 Days

Many joint sufferers prefer natural solutions but say they work too slowly. Take the best-seller glucosamine. Good as it is, the National Institutes of Health reports that glucosamine takes as long as eight weeks to work.

Yet in a study published in the International Journal of Medical Sciences, 60 patients with stiff knees took 100 mg of Indian Frankincense or a placebo daily for 30 days. Remarkably, Indian Frankincense "significantly improved joint function and relieved discomfort in as early as five days." That's relief that is 10 times faster than glucosamine.

78% Better Relief Than the Most Popular Joint Solution

In another study, people suffering from discomfort took a formula containing Indian Frankincense and another natural substance or a popular man-made joint solution every day for 12 weeks.

The results? Stunning! At the end of the study, 64% of those taking the Indian Frankincense formula saw their joint discomfort go from moderate or severe to mild or no discomfort. Only 28% of those taking the placebo got the relief they wanted. So Indian Frankincense delivered relief at a 78% better clip than the popular man-made formula.

In addition, in a randomized, double blind, placebo controlled study, patients suffering from knee discomfort took Indian Frankincense or a placebo daily for eight weeks. Then the groups switched and got the opposite intervention. Every one of the patients taking Indian Frankincense got relief. That's a 100% success rate—numbers unseen by typical solutions.

In addition, BMJ (formerly the British Medical Journal) reports that Indian Frankincense is safe for joint relief — so safe and natural you can take it every day.

Because of clinically proven results like this, Dr. Sears has made Indian Frankincense the centerpiece of a new natural joint relief formula called **Mobilify**.

Great Results for Knees, Hips, Shoulders and Joints

Joni D. says, "**Mobilify** really helps with soreness, stiffness and mild temporary pain. The day after taking it, I was completely back to normal—so fast." Shirley M. adds, "Two weeks after taking **Mobilify**, I had no knee discomfort and could go up and down the staircase." Larry M. says, "After a week and a half of taking **Mobilify**, the discomfort, stiffness and minor aches went away… it's almost like being reborn." And avid golfer Dennis H. says, "I can attest to **Mobilify** easing discomfort to enable me to pursue my golfing days. Definitely one pill that works for me out of the many I have tried."

How to Get Mobilify

Right now, the only way to get this powerful, unique formula that clobbers creaking joints in as little as five days without clobbering you is with Dr. Sears' breakthrough **Mobilify** formula. It is not available in stores.

To secure your bottle of this breakthrough natural joint discomfort reliever, buyers should call with Sears Health Hotline at **1-800-329-8434**. "The Hotline allows us to ship the product directly to customers."

Dr. Sears believes in this product so much, he offers a 100% money-back guarantee on ever order. "Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days, and I'll send you your money back," said Dr. Sears.

The Hotline will be taking orders for the next 48 hours. After that, the phone number may be shut down to allow them to restock. Call **1-800-329-8434** to secure your limited supply of **Mobilify**. If you are not able to get through due to extremely high call volume, please try again! Call NOW to qualify for this limited time offer provided at a significant discount. To take advantage of this exclusive offer use Promo Code: **AMLMB923** when you call.

THESE STATEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN EVALUATED BY THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. THIS PRODUCT IS NOT INTENDED TO DIAGNOSE, TREAT, CURE OR PREVENT ANY DISEASE. RESULTS MAY VARY FROM PERSON TO PERSON. NO INDIVIDUAL RESULT SHOULD BE SEEN AS TYPICAL. CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR BEFORE USE. ALL STUDIES PERFORMED WERE INDEPENDENT AND THIRD-PARTY 8

How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** e-mail **reunions@legion.org** or submit information online at **legion.org/reunions**.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are free.

Notices will remain online until the final day of the reunion. Upon submission, allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing twice a year.**

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, phone number and e-mail address. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206** or e-mail **reunions@legion.org**.

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are free.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.**

Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to ***The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**.

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your American Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to ***The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**. Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

ARMY

101st Abn Div Assn Showbirds, Tampa, FL, 2/14-17, George Buck, (727) 288-7757, uofhawaii@uhalumni.org; **101st Abn Recon Plt Mortars & HQ, Echo Co 2nd Bn 501st Inf (Vietnam, 1967-1972),** San Antonio, 3/25-28, Tom Hill, (704) 310-1800, tomnbonnie@bellsouth.net; **793rd MP Bn Assn & All Supporting Units,** Fort Leonard Wood, MO, 9/19-24, Diane De Rosa, (312) 615-8680, kianahula@aol.com

JOINT

Distinguished Flying Cross Society, Tucson, AZ, 10/19-23, Warren Eastman, (866) 332-6332, weastman@dfcsociety.org; **Korea Veterans,** Pigeon Forge, TN, 4/12-14, Chris Murphy, (828) 502-2802, koreaveterans@gmail.com

MARINES

Marine Embassy Guard Assn, San Antonio, 5/16-19, Bob Lighty, (717) 433-1105, bob.lighty@embassymarine.org

NAVY

Amphibious Ship Reunion Assn (All Yrs), Dayton, OH, 10/17-20, Jerry Wotherspoon, (813) 390-0830; ***Conserver* ARS 39,** Savannah, GA, 4/24-29, Dale Hower, (619) 449-4499, dcwoodworking1@yahoo.com; **Navy Nuclear Weapons Assn,** Tucson, AZ, 11/5-9, Tyrus George, (724) 516-7284, tyrusg3175@gmail.com; ***Robert H. McCard* DD 822,** Jacksonville, FL, 11/8-12, John Hagen, (507) 951-2710, johnhcamaro@gmail.com; ***Tutuila* ARG 4,** Gatlinburg, TN, 4/29-5/2, Guy Veni, (910) 295-1045, gveni@nc.rr.com; **VF-213 Black Lions,** Pensacola, FL, 11/3-5, Jerry Carson, (641) 340-3194, jcarson@iowatelecom.net; **VS-24 Scouts**, Jacksonville, FL (Cruise), 3/14-17, Kenneth Tuschhoff, (321) 696-1781, kenneth.tuschhoff@gmail.com; ***Wainwright* DLG/CG 28,** Charleston, SC, 11/13-17, Rodney Shafer, (269) 967-3536, rodney.c.shafer@gmail.com

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Post 328, CA: Fred Adams, Michael Dalfior, Jennifer Turpin
Post 197, FL: Arnold Merriweather, Joann Miller, Aubrey B. Smith Jr., Vermelle Smith
Post 181, NY: Theresa Baginski

IN SEARCH OF

3rd Recon (Rock Pile, Vietnam, 1969), John Bauman, (618) 675-3134, mary.m.bauman@gmail.com

41st Arty Grp HG HQ Btry (Phu Cat, Vietnam, 1968), Richard Weinberg, taxilawman2@aol.com

328th Comm Recon Co (Bad Aibling, Germany, 1952-1957), Bob Hilliard, (803) 298-0166, r.l.hilliard@att.net

526th MP Co Philadelphia AWOL Apprehension Unit (Fort Meade, MD, 1972-1973), Reuben Neterval, (218) 464-7593

1607th Comm & Electronics Sqdn, All Shops (Dover AFB, 1961-1964), Joel Gray, 1607thcomm.elect@gmail.com

Air Grp 21 VA-212 Line Crew (Moffett Field, CA, 1956-1957), Joe Lee, (678) 458-0463

***Belleau Wood* "Flight Quarters" History Book,** Ronald Beaulieu, P.O. Box 56, Gorham, ME 04038, (207) 222-0331

Charlie Btry 2nd & 17th Field Arty (Vietnam), Jeff Wilcox, (616) 581-9659, wilcox.j79@att.net

HQ 3rd Bn 19th Inf 24th Inf Div (Henry Kaserne Motor Pool, Munich, Germany, 1963-1965), David Secor, (716) 751-9267

HQ Btry 1st Air Defense Guided Msl Bde Personnel Sect (Fort Bliss, TX, 1963-1964), Thomas Stephenson, (847) 480-7378

Plt 136 (MCRD San Diego, 1958), Herbert Williams, (510) 367-3317, wms3740@comcast.net

TAPS

Neal S. Sundeen, Dept. of Arizona. Nat'l Historian 1980-1981, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1981-1983, Nat'l Finance Cmsn. Memb. 1983-1986 and 1991-1995, Nat'l Cmte. on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution Memb. 1985-1988, Nat'l Finance Cmsn. Vice Chmn. 1986-1991, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1995-2000, Nat'l Legis. Cmsn. Memb. 2000-2018 Nat'l Endowment Fund Corp. Memb. 2003-2012 and Nat'l Endowment Fund Corp. Director 2007-2015.

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Your vehicle donation provides critical support that allows us to continue our mission, and making a donation is easy!
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WAYS TO GIVE

AMERICAN LEGION | Veterans & Children Foundation

The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation funds service officers who provide free assistance to help veterans secure the benefits they've earned through military service.

These funds also extend a financial safety net for military and veteran families with children who face unexpected financial hardships that threaten the stability of their home.

LEARN MORE ONLINE

LEGION.ORG/VCF

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At Halloween, boo unto others as you would have them boo unto you.

AN ENGLISH TEACHER asked the class, "When does a book become a classic?"

One student answered, "When people who haven't read it start to say they have."

I WAS AT THE GYM and decided to jump on the treadmill. But people gave me weird looks, so I started jogging instead.

A WORRIED-LOOKING MAN went into a florist's shop and asked for potted geraniums. The shop was out, but the clerk suggested chrysanthemums.

"No, they won't do," the man said. "I promised my wife I'd water her geraniums while she was away."

AS LONG AS cocoa beans grow on trees, chocolate is fruit to me.

A DOCTOR making a house call was taken to the patient's room, but soon came downstairs and asked for a screwdriver. Five minutes later, he was back, this time asking for a can opener. A few minutes after that, he demanded a chisel and hammer.

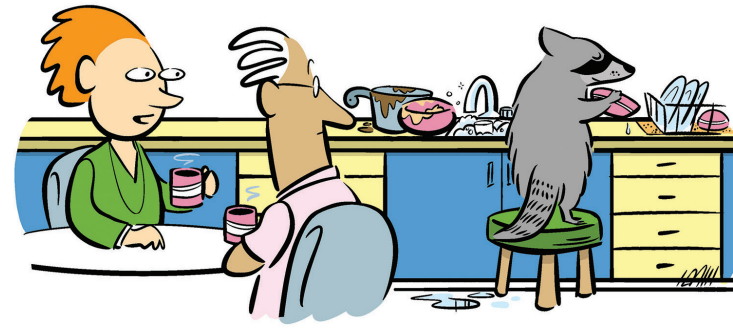
The distraught wife couldn't stand it any longer and exclaimed, "Please, doctor, what's wrong with my husband?"

"I don't know yet," the doctor answered. "I can't get my bag open."

EVERY TIME a bird messes up my car, I go out on my patio and eat some scrambled eggs, just to show them who's boss.

MY GRANDFATHER DIED while making butter on his farm. It was a very unfortunate churn of events.

"MY FAVORITE road sign is 'Falling Rocks.' What exactly am I supposed to do with that information? They may as well have a sign saying, 'Random accidents ahead,' 'Life's a lottery,' 'Be lucky.'" – *Jimmy Carr*



"Raccoons don't wash their food, but they do wash their dishes."

"Let's not lose sight of the fact that a huge amount of water is *not* getting in."

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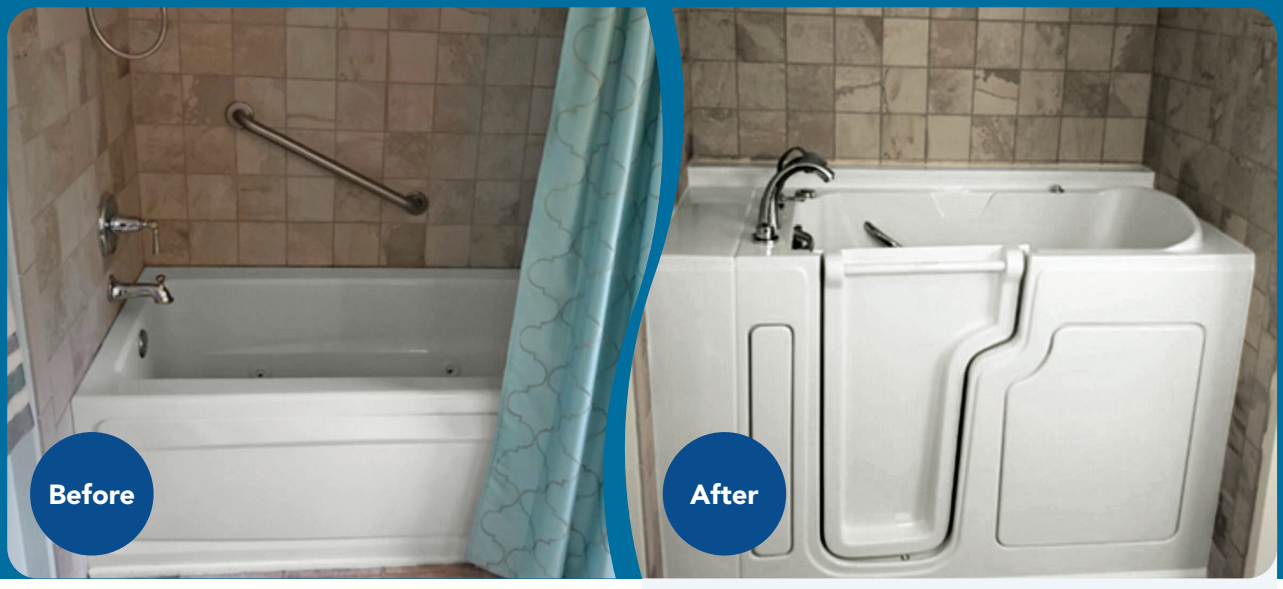

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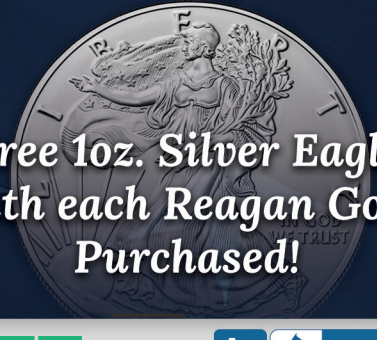

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